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Info!!

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Hello everyone and thank you for reading!!

This book is based on art by @the_fox_witch on Instagram!!

Here are the headcannons and designs I will be using (mostly) in the book.

REMINDER: THE HEADCANONS/DESIGNS BELONG TO @the_fox_witch ON INSTAGRAM.

THEY DO NOT BELONG TO ME.

The only things I own are the cover art and the story!

Anyways, enjoy!!

And special thanks to @the_fox_witch!

-Nebula

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

“Ruski.... Ruski wake up!”

My eyes lazily snapped open as I heard his younger brother calling my name and shaking me. I sighed and rolled over to face the blue and yellow faced country.

“Uke... what time is it?” I asked, slowly sitting up, my body protesting from the pain that had ensued the night before.

“It's almost eight, I'd let you sleep more but I don't want dad to yell at you. Bela and Kazi are getting ready down stairs.”

“Down stairs...” I muttered, rubbing my head. “Wait how'd I get up here?”

“Me and Kazi dragged you up here after dad passed out.” Ukraine replied. “I'm going to go check on the other two. You should hurry.”

Ukraine quickly slid off the bed and left the room, leaving me to get ready by myself.

I groaned, grabbing my ushanka off the nightstand and swinging my legs over the bed and grabbing my prosthetic.

I put on the slip and winced as he shoved my leg into the prosthetic. I'd been due for a new one for a few months now, but I didn't want to face my father's wrath. Plus, I doubted father would help me pay for a new one.

“Stupid plane crash...” I muttered, finishing attaching the leg and throwing on a fresh t-shirt on my bare chest on the way down the stairs.

“Morning big brother!” Belarus greeted me as I walked into the

kitchen. "We made you breakfast!"

"Thanks Bela." I smiled, taking the small bowl of soggy cereal from the girl that pushed it in front of me. "You're the best sister."

She giggled.

"Russia we're almost out of food again." Ukraine announced, pulling his head out of the fridge. "It's your turn to ask dad, I did it last time."

"I'll take care of it tomorrow." I said, shoving a bite of cereal into my mouth. "Don't worry about it."

Me and Ukraine took shifts asking their father for things. Food, clothes, toiletries. It wasn't like we didn't have the money, I knew my father could take care of us, but he didn't want to. Not since mom died.

Ever since mom passed away, the house had become a nightmare. My father was always drunk, always yelling, always blaming someone. He'd become this monster. I had seen father do things I never wanted repeated. The hardest part was keeping my siblings out of it.

I did my best to convince the younger ones that their life was normal, that things were okay. So far, it has only somewhat worked on Belarus and Kazakhstan. Ukraine, unfortunately, was too smart for his own good and I couldn't seem to keep him away from dad anymore.

I finished up my food and put my dishes in the sink, starting to clean up breakfast. It was a typical morning for a typical family, until my dad walked in.

The backdoor slammed open, startling the siblings as my father stumbled in, clearly very much hungover.

There was silence.

"Morning Dad." Belarus spoke up softly.

"Morning Dad..." The rest of us said in unison.

“Russia.” USSR barked. “You deal with them, I’ll be in my office. No one bother me.”

My father groaned, clutching the sides of his head as he left the room.

“Dads super hungover again.” Ukraine piped up happily. “It means he’ll be in too much pain tonight to yell at us.”

“Uke.” I chided, giving my brother a look that said, ‘We’ll talk about this later’.

“Can we go to the park then?” Kazakhstan piped up.

“Yes please!” Belarus nodded.

“I don't see why not.” I shrugged, smiling slightly at my siblings enthusiasm.

Bela and Kazi squealed with joy and raced off to get their coats and shoes. I glanced over at Ukraine and saw the barest trace of smile on his face, he didn't smile often anymore, so it was a welcome sight.

Mom used to take me and Uke to the park when we were kids and took Bela and Kazi as much as she could before she got sick. I knew the younger ones asked to go at any chance because it made them feel closer to mom, which I didn't blame them for. I could honestly use sometime to feel close to her, which was hard since me and my siblings were forbidden from visiting her grave.

The last time I’d seen it was four years ago at her funeral, and that was it.

I shook myself out of the memories and walked to the backdoor with my siblings in tow.

“Uke you should grab a jacket, I don't want you getting cold.” I said, as I opened the door, it was a chilly spring day and I knew how sensitive he was to temperatures.

“I’ll be fine.” He huffed, pushing past me.

“Fine....” I sighed, pulling on my fluffy coat as we left the house.

My little brother used to be the happiest kid I knew, super positive, always getting in trouble for playing outside too much. But after mom's death I felt like I barely even knew him. He'd become even more stubborn than usual, trying to act more grown up, I kind of hated to be honest. The kid was fourteen, he shouldn't be dealing with this stuff.

“Ruski hurry up!” My little sister giggled as she took my hand, dragging me the whole way to the park.

The park was small only having a few swings, a see-saw, and a slide. It was tucked away in a small patch of woods that enclosed the playground.

I stood off to the side with Uke, who refused to go with Bela and Kazi to play.

After a few minutes of just standing there, I nudged the smaller boy with my elbow.

“Ow! What was that for?” He glared.

“Oh just go play with them. You know you want to.” I smirked.

“Fine..” He said, running off with the younger two, after a few minutes I could see him smiling and laughing and playing with his siblings.

I sighed contentedly and sat down, leaning against a tree and slipping off the tight prosthetic, feeling more relaxed then I had been in a while. I closed my eyes and let myself go, slipping off into a peaceful sleep.

“Tag you're it!”

My eyes snapped open as I felt

Kazakhstan's hand press into my chest and run away giggling.

“Hey!” I yelled. “I’ll get you back for that!”

I quickly strapped my leg back on and chased after my little brother.

I raced after my siblings who were all whooping and laughing by now.

I tagged Kazi, he tagged Uke who got me, I got Bela, Bela got me back, Uke was tagged next, then me then Kazi. We tagged back and forth so many times until we all found ourselves in a laughing heap on the ground.

“I love you Russia.” Belarus smiled, kissing my cheek.

“I love you too Bela-roo.” I said calling her by her private nickname and ruffling her hair.

She giggled.

I looked up at the sky from where my head was resting on Kazi and frowned.

“It’s getting late guys, we should back.” I said, sitting up and disrupting the pile.

I was met with a few ‘boos’ and groans from the crowd but we all stood up and headed back anyways.

As we walked, I noticed Uke with his arms pressed tightly to his chest and shook from the chilly evening air.

“Here.” I said, pulling off my coat and wrapping it around his shoulders.

“I-i don't need it.” He replied, his teeth chattered as he coughed slightly.

“Sure you don't. But you still should wear it, especially with your immune system being so weak.” I reminded him.

He slipped his arms into the parka and wrapped it tightly around

his body.

“Thanks Russia...” He replied quietly.

“Anytime.”

We entered the house in good spirits and high hopes for this evening. I prayed it would last, but based on my luck I knew I'd be wrong.

I was helping Bela with the last few buttons on her coat when my father walked in. I felt my heart drop in my chest as he took a swig from his vodka.

You'd think by now I wouldn't be scared of him, but I was.

“Hello father.” I said, straightening my back as I stood up.

“Welcome home.... Russia.”

A/n: WHOOOOOOOOOOOOO !!! FIRST CHAPTER IS DONE!!!

I have been wanting to write this forever guys you have noooo idea.

And extra super amazing special thanks to @the_fox_witch on Instagram for inspiring this book and letting me use her amazing designs for it too! I can't thank them enough!!

Chapter 2

Chapter 2

"Where the hell have you all been all day?" My father asked, taking another sip of his drink and wiping his alcohol stained sleeve across his mouth.

"We went to the park. You said to deal with them. We're back before sundown. I thought it would be alright."

I was cut off by a sharp slap across the cheek.

I could hear Bela squeal in fear and Uke protectively put his arm around her and push Kazi back.

"It's not alright." USSR snarled. "No give me your belt."

I slowly pulled my belt from my jeans, I could already feel my skin tingling in anticipation. I placed it in my father's hands.

"Uke get them upstairs." I hissed to my younger brother.

He nodded and grabbed their hands, pulling them upstairs as quickly as he could.

I breathed a mental sigh of relief at their current safety.

"Hurry up Russia, you're a big boy. You know the drill." My father spat, tearing away my attention from my siblings.

I nodded, and pulled off my shirt and leaning my fore arms on the wall and pressing my head to my hands. I shut my eyes tight and waited to feel the crack of the belt against my skin, already worn thin from the beatings from many nights before.

Thwap!

I inhaled sharply as the leather struck my back.

Twap! Thwap! Thwap!

I clenched my teeth tightly, I'd learned a long time ago not to scream. My father would punish me more I made any noise.

I was struck more and more with the belt.

"Here." My fathers said, kicking in my knee so I fell face forward into the wall. "That'll teach you not to leave the house with out my permission."

I felt him throw my belt back on my body as I lay there on the floor, blood pouring from my nose. He walked off, muttering and swearing, I heard my name a few times in there too.

I managed to pull myself into sitting position and grab my belt and shirt. I slowly, painfully stood up and dragged myself up the stairs.

I spotted Ukraine coming out of Belas bedroom and called out to him.

"Uke!" I whisper-yelled.

His head whipped around to face me.

"Russia, is it over?" He asked, quickly coming over to help me.

"Yeah. We should be fine for the rest of the night." I replied, swallowing hard.

My brother helped me into my room and onto my bed. I began ripping off my prosthetic while Ukraine pulled out some cream and bandages from my dresser and got to work on my back after he passed me one for my nose.

"I don't think it's broken this time." I chuckled softly through a wince.

My brother didn't reply.

"Are Bela and Kazi okay?" I asked.

"There fine." He said shortly.

"Uke-"

"You should have let me take some of the blame down there! I'm not a kid okay? Dad shouldn't just beat you up because you're the oldest, he should atleast have taken it out on me too." Ukraine cut in.

I whirled around and grabbed his shoulders, startling him with the gesture.

"Ukraine listen to me. If you ever think there's any way in hell I would ever. Ever. Let you take a beating from dad for 'not good reason' then you're wrong. You're my little brother. Always. It doesn't matter how old you are I'm going to protect you from him until the day I die." I said fiercely. "Got that?"

He nodded.

"Good." I sighed, letting go of his shoulders. "Sorry for grabbing you like that."

"It's fine." He shrugged, not meeting my eyes. "I'm almost finished with the cuts if you want to..."

"Yeah sure." I replied, turning around so he could finish patching me up.

We sat there in silence for a few moments while he worked on the last mark.

"Okay I'm done." He said, slipping off the bed and putting away the supplies.

"Thanks." I said, throwing my shirt back on. "Go to sleep now. You have school tomorrow. You need the rest."

He nodded and headed for the door, opening it, then pausing.

"Hey Russia?" He said slowly, facing me, but not meeting my eyes. "Thanks."

“You’re welcome.” I replied. “Night Ukraine, I’ll see you in the morning.”

“Night.” He muttered softly, leaving my room and shutting the door behind him.

I pulled off my ushanka and tossed it on the nightstand, pulling out my phone from the top drawer. If my dad knew I still had it he’d kill me.

I only had a few notifications, just a few emails and one or two from youtube. My favorite notification though, was the one from Ame.

Stars and Stripes: Hey Russia you there? Im bored.

Stars and Stripes: Russia its been 8 hours, you planning to break up with me or something? Lmao please don't but pfffft not like I'd care

Stars and Stripes: Hoe pick up the phone

I chuckled slightly at his messages.

Ame and I had been dating for six months now and it was the best think that had ever happen to me. We’d kept a low profile about it in fear of my dad finding out. He’d kill me if he found out I was dating, and kill me more if he knew it was a guy, and kill me even more if he knew it was Ame.

Commie Child: Hey Ame, sorry I couldn't text

Commie Child: Its been a long day

I clicked off my phone, and pulled myself under my covers.

It had been a long day.

All my days felt long now.

Atleast there was school tomorrow. It ment I could keep the kids out of the house and away from my father for a few hours.

I closed my eyes and just as I did so, my phone buzzed.

Stars and Stripes: Hey its cool no worries!

Stars and Stripes: Was it your dad again?

I sighed.

Commie Child: Yeah. You know how it is

I waited for his response, knowing it'd take him a little longer then then other people, but I didn't mind.

Stars and Stripes: You can always stay the night if you don't mind my mom cooing over you the whole time

Commie Child: I'd love to but you know I can't leave them alone

Commie Child: Thanks for the offer tho

Stars and Stripes: Anytime

I let out an involuntary yawn as my body began to beg for sleep now that I was in my bed.

Commie Child: I'm going to go to bed now, we'll talk okay?

Stars and Stripes: Okay then babe, I'll 'see' you tomorrow!

I chuckled slightly at the running joke.

Commie Child: Haha see you tomorrow. Love you.

Stars and Stripes: Love you too.

I grinned and set my alarm for the morning, inside I prayed that tomorrow would be better.

A/n: Sorry for the wait guys!! But I'm super excited to have chapter two up. I know we're only two chapters in, but I feel like I have so much potential for this story already.

And thank you so much for reading. It means alot to me that

I've gotten such support with doing other projects that arnt my oneshot book.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Beep! Beep! Beep!

I sleepily groped for my phone, trying to turn the stupid thing off.

Finally turning it off, I sat up in my bed, ignoring the throbbing pain in my back, I got ready for the school day.

I threw on mostly clean clothes, clearly we needed a launny day, my leg and grabbed my backpack off the floor and headed down the hall to go wake up my siblings.

I gently woke up Belarus who didn't want to get up. I knew she got extra tired when she was stressed, and after last night...

Kazakhstan got himself up, he was such a morning person. I didn't understand how people could just wake up early, but it meant less work on my part in the mornings.

Ukraine was the worst.

If he could sleep in, he was fine to wake up, but getting him up early for school... well that was a different story.

"Uke.... We have school today..." I said, shaking him. "Come on we do this every morning..."

He groaned and rolled over, away from me.

"Canada is going to be at school and you can pine after him and dream about his soft, syrupy, Canadian lips." I smirked.

"Rus!" Ukraine huffed, rolling over and smacking me in the face with the pillow, glaring at me.

"Oh good. Now you're awake. Come on, grab something to eat and meet me in the car at ten." I said, walking out of the room.

I headed into the kitchen and scrounged around the pantry until I found three protein bars. I wasn't much, but it would hold them over for the morning.

I helped Bela and Kazi with their backpacks and sent them out to the car.

"Ukraine! Come on or were going to be late!" I called up the stairs.

"I'm coming." He sighed, walking down the stairs and past me to the car.

I headed to my dad's office, I hoped he would be asleep.

I gently knocked and poked my head in.

"What is it Russia?" My father sighed, he seemed to be working on some papers.

"Just came to tell you we're going to school now." I replied.

"Alright but I want all of you back after school. No clubs. No activities. No friends. Understood?" He said, giving me a pointed look.

"Yes sir." I said, pulling my head back out and closing the door.

I left the house and got into my car.

Well, it had been my mom's car actually. We'd never gotten rid of it and I didn't care to ask my dad for a new one.

It was a pretty quiet ride to drop off Belarus and Kazakhstan, I just always felt bad that I had to drop them so early.

Once I'd gotten them settled in at school, I finished my route to the highschool. It was a lot easier now that Ukraine was old enough to go to the same school as me. I used to have to drive him to

middle school and miss part of the first block to do.

We got out of the car and headed into the building.

"Ukraine!"

Both of our heads turned to see Canada waving happily to my little brother.

"Go get em." I nudged my brother.

"Stop that." He huffed, but quickly rushed off to go meet his friend.

And now, to find Ame.

It wasn't hard, he was in his usual spot at one of the tables in the cafeteria.

I grinned slightly, sneaking up behind my boyfriend.

"Hi." I said lowly in his ear.

He yelped and smacked me across the face in surprise.

"Russia! Don't do that!" He said, his voice an octave higher than normal.

"Sorry." I chuckled, slipping in next to him and giving his hand a squeeze under the table. "But it was worth it."

"Oh sureeee pick on the guy that can't see huh?" He retorted, leaning his head on my shoulder. "You're lucky I like you so much."

"I said I was sorry." I shrugged slightly.

"So anyways, do you want to come over after school? It sounded like you had a rough day yesterday." He offered.

"I'd love to, but my dad would kill me. He wants it all back straight after school. And no, he didn't give me a reason either."

Ame let out a low whistle.

"No offense but your dad kind of sucks, you know that?"

"Yeah I know. I-"

The bell rang cutting me off.

"Time to go." I sighed, getting out of the table and helping Ame out.

I held his hand fast in mine as we headed to class together.

Lunch time.

The one bit of time I got to spend with my friends. Atleast, I think we were friends? I'd never really been good with people, even before mom died. I guess I came off as cold and also everyone knew about my dad.

As I walked into the cafeteria, I heard all the usual comments.

"That's him right?"

"That's Soviets kid!"

"I've heard his dad is really scary."

"Isn't his mom dead?"

"Id kill myself if I were him."

"Shh!! Keep your voice down!! He might hear you!!"

I just walked in with as much fake confidence as I could muster and plopped down next to Ame.

"Hey guys." I said to the group.

I was met with a mixture of hellos from Japan, Germany, Philippines, and Finland. We were an odd bunch, each having our differences, but we made it work.

"How did you think the chem test went?" Phil asked politely,

taking a bite of some food.

"Uhhh..." I winced.

"Well did you study?" Germany asked, not looking up from his work.

"No. I didn't have time." I replied. "I had a busy weekend."

"I see." Germany replied, glancing up at me for a moment.

The group only knew the basics of what I dealt with. My dad was mean, I wasn't allowed to leave the house alot, and sometimes I came to school with marks. They didn't ask questions, which worked I appreciated. It was hard to come up with excuses now, I'd used so many.

My little brother and his totally-not-boyfriend Canada walked up to the table and sat down with their lunch. They shared one now, Canada packed stuff for Ukraine so he didn't have to go hungry.

I didn't like taking charity from others, but Canada had surprising stubbornness about the situation. For such a laid back country, he was surprisingly concrete when it came to people he cared about. I had respect for the guy.

I currently had less respect for my boyfriend who was talking to Japan about how many tater-tots one could fit in their mouth before choking.

"I definitely think you could get at least eight, maybe ten or twelve if you really squished them in there." He said pointedly, moving his hands as he talked. "What do you think?"

"What a tater-tot?" Japan asked, cocking her head.

"Probably some greasy fried American food." Finland cut in.

"Well yes, but you see..." He began.

I chuckled mentally at him. It was so cute when he got passionate about a subject, no matter how weird it was. He'd get this really

concentrated look on his face and a goofy smile and he'd use his hands alot, occasionally smacking someone in the face, usually me.

I pulled myself out of my head and moved my attention to Ukraine.

"How are classes?" I asked him.

"Fine." He shrugged as Canada gently handed him a sandwich.
"Same as usual."

"You didn't tell him the best part!" Canada grinned. "Uke's president of the botany club! He did really well with his presentation, I'm super proud of you Ukraine!"

I watched as my brother's face became very red at his friends' words. Man, he really had a huge thing for Canada. I wondered why he hadn't just asked him out already?

"That's great Uke. Congrats." I offered, but feeling slightly bad because I knew that with Dad it's be harder for him to attend club meetings which I knew he loved.

We finished out the lunch period, it seemed to go by too fast. There was laughing and talking and it was one of the few times I didn't have to think about anything else.

As I took Ame to his first class, he gave my hand a tight squeeze.

"I love you." He said, "And I can't call or text tonight. We're visiting Aussie in the hospital. Sorry."

"It's okay, I just hope he feels better." I replied, kissing his cheek.
"Love you too. I'll see you tomorrow."

"See you tomorrow." He grinned, giving me a wave as he headed into the classroom.

"How was school guys?" I asked, looking at Bela and Kazi through the mirror as they got in the car.

“Good.” Kazi replied.

“Look at what I made!” Bela said, showing me a drawing she’d done in class.

“Wow! Looking good.” I smiled encouragingly.

“Thanks. It was for my lit. circle book.” She replied as I started the drive home.

“Did you do anything fun in school Kazi?” I asked.

“Not really...” He said quietly.

“That’s okay. I’m sure you’ll do something fun tomorrow.” I said, gently turning a corner.

I knew Kazakhstan hated school, people were always looking at him sideways because of our father or trying to touch his soft wings.

The wings were becoming a huge hassle when it came to small doors and public places I hoped they were being accommodated at school. But it wouldn’t surprise me if they weren’t, the school staff could only do so much and they probably didn’t care enough.

Kazi, Bela and Uke talked in the back, I just tuned it out and focused on the road in front of me.

Part of me just wanted to turn the car around and take us to Ames house, or far far away from my father. With each passing day I wanted to leave him so so badly. I could never seem to bring myself to.

I pulled into the drive and turned off the car.

“Alright guys, we’re... Here...” I said as we got out.

I hadn’t called ‘home’ in years. It wasn’t a home. It was hell.

And I couldn’t seem to find heaven.

A/n: Sorry if this chapter was a little slow, I really wanted to establish thier school lives a bit and other relationships outside of the family.

Also! Blind!Ame taken from @the_fox_witch on Instagram!!

Thank you all so much for over 300 reads!! Its only been less then a week and I can't believe it. Thank you!!

Chapter 4

Chapter 4

“Good job!” I smiled, high fiving my youngest brother.

Kazi gave me a small smile and high fived me back.

“Okay, that's the last one.” I said, helping him clean up his homework. “Thank you for doing your homework.”

My mother had always thanked us for doing our homework, she always understood how hard school was and she was always there to help us with it.

Even my dad would help me with math or literature if I had trouble.

“Now go upstairs and get ready for bed.” I said, “I'll come check on you in a few minutes.”

Kazi slipped off the chair and gave me a small smile before running off upstairs.

My smile faded as I watched him go, I had my own homework to do.

I groaned aloud as I began working through the tedious problems. It seemed to go on for ever and ever, in the back of my mind, I knew time was probably moving faster than I thought it was.

I yawned and stretched as I finished up the last problem. Now, what time was i-

“Midnight?!” I breathed, quickly rushing up the stairs as fast as I could manage without collapsing from the pain.

I quietly slipped my head into Kazis room. He was fast asleep. I felt a pang of guilt in my chest, he'd probably tried to stay up

waiting for me. Sighing, I closed the door and turned to see Uke peering out of his room.

"It's late you shouldn't be up." I sighed, making chewing motions with my hands.

"Neither should you." He huffed, crossing his arms.

"Well someone has to get groceries. And do you really want to be the one to ask Dad?"

I saw his eyes widen and his shoulders tense, I instantly regretted threatening him with our father.

"Whatever. Night." He said, closing the door.

"Night..." I replied softly, knowing he couldn't hear me.

I slowly made my way down the stairs, I really hoped he was in a good mood.

I knocked softly on the office door and stepped in.

"Hello... dad..." I said, my heart beating quickly in my chest.

My father took another sip of his vodka, glaring at me with drunken intensity.

"What do you want?" He slurred.

"We're out of food." I said, keeping my voice firm. "I need money to buy more."

He narrowed his eyes.

"What the hell do you think this is? Some sort of charity?" He said, his voice growing louder. "You're trying to steal from me aren't you?"

"No sir." I shook my head. "We don't have any food I swear."

"Here." He said, giving me a meager wad of cash. "And if you think you can take money whenever you're a little hungry, you might as

well just starve to death. If you're not back with the groceries in an hour I'll kill you myself."

I quickly grabbed the cash and ducked the bottle that sailed over my head, ignoring the sharp glass that'd grazed my arm.

Clutching the cash close to my chest, I glanced down at the blood slowly dripping on my sleeves as I slipped into my car.

"You've got to be kidding..." I muttered, reaching into the glove compartment of the passenger's seat.

Pulling out a roll of bandages, we kept them everywhere in case of an accident or dad, I quickly pulled off my old bandages and put on new ones.

I started the car and turned up the radio as I sped down the road.

It felt amazing to be alone. Out of my house. Just me and the music and the road and the night.

I was almost disappointed to reach the store.

Walking down the aisles, I picked out the least expensive food I could find that at least had some nutritional value.

The small store was mostly empty, just a few late night parents grabbing something they needed for their kids in the morning, a few teens milling around and tired from whatever late night activities they'd been up to, probably one or two drug addicts, and me.

I was walking down the snack aisle when someone walked up next to me.

"Hi Russia." Czechia smiled, grabbing some Kolonáda wafers from off the shelf.

"Hey Czech." I said to my younger cousin. "What's got you out this late?"

He and Slovakia were the only family I'd ever met. My

grandparents on both sides had died before I was born. Mom didn't have any siblings. Dads side was messy, I was related to a lot of people in different ways, it got complicated.

"Hungry." He replied, grabbing some more snacks off the shelf. "I had late hockey practice. You?"

"Grocery run." I said.

"Oh fun."

"Yeah."

He checked his phone.

"Shoot I've got to go. Kia's yelling at me for taking forever." He chuckled. "I'll see you around! Just text if you want to hang out at my house sometime. Moms been asking for you guys to come over. Anyways, bye!"

"Bye...." I replied with a small wave.

Now alone in the isle, I grabbed what I needed to and went down the next isle, where all the medical supplies and drugs were kept.

I grabbed fresh packs of bandages, some painkillers for my leg, and a box of medical masks for Uke. He wore them when his germophobia acted up. Which was a lot more now.

I got to the check out line and prayed that I'd added everything up correctly.

I bit my lip as the numbers went up on the screen.

"You're \$16.32 short hun." The cashier said.

I had to make a choice, my meds or Ukraine's masks.

"Take the pain meds off and return them for me please." I said, passing her the money.

"Sure thing honey." She said, taking it off and ringing my up.
"Have a nice day."

"You too." I replied, taking the bags and heading out to my car.

I got into the driver's seat and rested my head against the steering wheel.

I just sat there for a few minutes.

Nothing is going through my head. Just silence, inside and out.

Starting the car, I drove straight home. I was there and back in under an hour.

My father passed out in a drunken heap on the floor of the living room, I quietly moved into the kitchen and put away the food. Grabbing the bag of toiletries and extras, I headed back up the stairs.

"Kazi?" I said in surprise. "What are you doing up?"

The younger boy looked up at me tiredly from his place on the top step.

"Uke said you went to the store. I..." He looked down. "I wanted to make sure you were coming back."

He turned his head away from me, trying to hide the tears I knew were starting to come as his wings moved tightly against his body.

"Kaz..." I said quietly, helping him to his feet. "Why don't we get you into bed so we can talk, hm?"

He nodded and I pulled him into his room, gently tucking him into his bed.

"What's wrong buddy?" I asked, brushing a stray hair from his face.

"Why didn't you think I was going to come back?"

He inhaled shakily.

"The other kids at school were saying mean things to me. T-they

told me mom died because she didn't care about me and she would die then take care of me." He sniffed, tears flowing faster.

"The-the kids said that one day you wouldn't come back for me, like mom. A-and that I was j-just a useless winged freak and n-no one should love me." He cried.

My eyes went wide in horror and shock as my brother pulled his knees into a ball and sobbed.

"Kazakhstan.... I'm not going to leave you. Ever. You're my littlest brother and... I do care about you." I said gently rubbing his back.

Kazi was usually so calm, and quiet, showing little emotion. It was me, Uke, and Bela that were more likely to break down. Not him. What had they done to him?

"Mom loved us. She loved you. Don't you dare believe for a second she didn't." I continued, trying my best to comfort him. "And you're not a useless winged freak or whatever they said. Your wings are super cool and they're just jealous you'll be able to fly someday."

"R-really?" He said, looking up at me.

"Definitely." I smiled reassuringly.

"Thanks Russia." He said quietly.

"You're welcome Kazi." I said, gently patting his wing.

I scooted closer to him and pulled my knees up as well, ignoring the pulsating pain in what was left of my right leg as I put an arm around him.

He slowly traced his fingers around the prosthetic, a habit he and Bela had.

"Can you tell me what happened?" He asked innocently, looking up into my eyes.

My chest tightened.

'Russia move!'

'He won't make it...'

'Mom? I'm scared'

Screams.

"Some other time." I said quickly, sliding off the bed.

He yawned.

"Can I sleep now?" He asked.

"Of course." I replied, tucking him under the covers. "Night
солнце."

I quietly left the room and flopped onto my bed.

I groaned as quietly as I could as I pulled off the fake leg. I glared at it.

"I hate you."

I wanted to throw it against the wall but I didn't, I just tossed it to the floor instead and threw my ushanka on the nightstand.

I rummaged through the drawer for what was left of my painkillers.

One last dose.

I swore and threw them back in.

Another night.

I flipped off my lamp and rolled over. I could feel pain throbbing on my right side.

I whimpered softly.

I wanted to cry.

But I wouldn't.

I couldn't.

I was the big brother.

And big brothers don't cry.

A/n: Ah sorry if that one was a little short, I've been very busy with school lately but I really wanted to post another chapter.

It's interesting huh?

I'm having fun exploring Rus and Kazis relationship, as well as Russia dealing with his current mental and physical condition.

I hope the characters are starting to feel more alive as I go, it's something I'm really shooting for with this book.

Anyways, have a great day/night!!

Thank you so much for reading.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5

“Uke.... Uke... get up. I swear I will smother you with this pillow. Don't test me.” I groaned, trying to get my younger brother out of his bed.

“Rus stop....” He said, sleepily trying to slap me away. “Just go....”

“I would but if I do you'll fall asleep. Come on.” I poked his sides.

“Fine!” He grumbled getting out of the bed.

He did *not* look good.

He looked pale, tired, and sweaty.

He was sick.

“I'll.. meet you downstairs.” I said quietly, quickly leaving the room.

Ukraine was sick.....

“Please no....” I groaned leaning against the wall.

Ukraine hadn't been the same since Chernobyl. The accident had been about the time mom got sick. She hadn't been able to be there for him, due to being confined to her own room. He was so scared. I remember him calling out for her in the night while I stayed at the hospital waiting.

Dad had made everything worse.

Once the hospital bills had come back, he snapped. He took Uke into his office. I only saw flashes. Heard screams. Felt pain in my chest. When Ukraine came back out. He was never the same.

I was so scared. I wanted to call the police. Scream to the world. But I couldn't. We had one rule.

Don't tell mom.

It was Dad's only rule. Don't tell mom.

She didn't need the stress, she was sick, we didn't want her to get worse now did we? Mom had to get better, she was going to be fi-

"Ruski?" I was shaken from my thoughts as Bela tugged on my arm.

"We have to go to school and I can't get my backpack to close."

"Okay I'll help." I said, taking the backpack from her. "Jeez Bela, what's all this stuff for?"

"School project!" She grinned.

"Okay, please tell me you aren't taking anything you're not supposed to." I said, giving her a look.

"Nope!"

"Good girl." I smiled, kissing her forehead. "Uke? You coming?"

"I'm here." He said, coming out of his room and leaning on the door frame. "Let's go."

"Okay, meet you both in the car." I said as I limped down the stairs and to my dad's office.

Asleep.

Perfect.

I sighed with relief at not having to talk to him.

Popping into the driver's seat of the old car, I gave my siblings an encouraging smile as I drove down the road.

"You guys ready for school?" I asked with as much positivity as I could muster.

“Yes!” Bela replied, being the only one that liked school.

Kazi sighed and looked out the window, his wings twitched nervously.

Uke looked like he was going to throw up or have a fit or pass out or all three.

I finished dropping the kids at the middle school and finished the route to the highschool, parking in the parking lot.

“Uke.. hey wait.” I said, gently grabbing his arm, careful of the burns. “Listen, if you get, you know, tired, just call or text okay?”

He nodded slowly, not making eye contact and pulling up his mask as he got out and walked towards the building.

I leaned my head back into the seat and ran my fingers through my hair.

“Please let him be okay.” I said to no one in particular.

I wandered down the halls of the quiet school, taking my time to get to the bathroom, when I spotted Canada down the hall.

“Hey!” I called, hurrying towards him the best I could. “Canada!”

“Oh hi Russia!” He turned and smiled at me.

“How's Uke doing?” I asked, trying to keep the anticipation out of my voice.

“Hes.... um...” Canada glanced away nervously. “Well he's not doing good. Shouldn't he be staying home? He's already thrown up once... I tried to get him to go to the nurse, he freaked out when I brought it up... is that normal?”

I groaned.

“Okay I can't really explain, just don't bring up the nurse thing. It makes him anxious, I can't tell you why. And I cant take him home

either....” I said, not knowing how much Uke had told him about our situation. “Just please look out for him and text me if he gets too bad okay? He’ll listen to you.”

“You really think he’ll listen to me? I mean, he’s your brother after all.” Canada replied, looking slightly confused.

“You’re his best friend. Im just family. He got to choose you, he’s stuck with me.” I chuckled lightly as the bell rang. “I’ve got to go, see you later at lunch.”

“Bye!” Canada waved as we went our separate ways.

I bounced my leg in nervous anticipation as I waited for Canada and Uke. They should be here soon.

"Rus! You're shaking the table." America said, tapping my leg.

"Sorry..." I blinked, avoiding the glances my friends gave me.

"You okay? You've been kind of out of it all day." He frowned, feeling his way for my arm.

"It's... nothing, Ukraine has a cold, it's not a big deal." I said quickly.

"If you need help, just ask okay? Mom would be fine with him staying the night." He offered again. "And please take my offer at some point."

"I don't need help." I snapped.

His expression hardened and he pulled his hand off my arm.

"Fine then." He huffed, turning his head away.

I caught Japan's eye and she gave a little nod to Ame.

"America I'm sorry. That was harsh. I shouldn't have snapped like that." I said, gently taking his hand.

It was only a silly argument, but I was so scared to lose him. I didn't know what I'd do without him.

"It's fine. We're cool." He replied, giving my hand a squeeze and striking up a conversation with Germany.

He wasn't really the type to say "I'm sorry" or "I forgive you". His ego was huge. I seriously wondered how I dealt with it sometimes.

"Hey...Russia...." A voice said, startling me from behind.

I whirled around and put my hands up to cover my face.

Nothing.

I slowly put my hands down, everyone was staring at me.

"What the hell are you all looking at?" I growled at them, putting on my my-dad-is-scary-and-i'm-just-an-angry-screw-up face.

They all looked away and went back to their lunches.

"Wow Nada, you really should know better to scare him like that." Ame chuckled.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to...." Canada said, looking embarrassed.

"So what's up? Where's Uke?" I asked.

"Hes um..." He glanced to the side. "You better come with me."

I nodded and quickly got to my feet.

"Hey wait I'm going with you." Ame said, trying to grab my arm.

"I'll be right back." I said, rushing off with Canada.

Even though I knew I was now officially the world's worst boyfriend, my anxiety for Ukraine was unbearable.

Canada quickly led me down the hall to the boys bathroom, we turned into it and my heart dropped.

Ukraine was curled up on the floor against the wall, he looked like

a ghost let out a hard cough. I hadn't heard him cough like that since..... Chernobyl.....

“Uke, Ukraine oh my... hey..” I said, trying to keep the fear and shakiness out of my voice.

His eyes fluttered open as he looked at me, so sad and desperate.

“Come here buddy I got you...” I said, pulling him close to me. “I got you.... I'm going to take you home.”

He shook his head.

“D-dad....” He rasped. “C-can't go back....”

“Ukraine! You're so- not feeling well. I can't just leave you here.”

No response.

I pulled away, looking back at Canada.

“Can you run back to the lunch room for me and grab my stuff?” I asked. “I'm going to stay here with him until school is over. Oh- and please apologise to your brother for me. I've been kind of short with him today.”

“Yeah I'll be right back.” He replied, quickly leaving the bathroom.

I pulled Ukraine back into my arms.

“It's okay... I'm here....”

It felt like it took a million years to get home.

I rushed me and Uke out of the school, grabbed Bela and Kazi as fast as I could, and zoomed well over the speed limit to get us back to the house.

I carried him from the car and up the stairs to his room. I laid him gently in his bed and pushed back his blue and yellow hair to feel

his forehead. He was burning up.

Kazi caught my eye as he stepped into the room.

“Hey Kaz, can you run down and get me some water and an ice pack from the freezer?” I said.

“Is he...” Kazi said quietly.

“He's fine, just a little congested.” I lied. “Go on.”

His wings fluttered nervously as he looked from me to Uke for a moment before leaving.

I took a deep breath before turning my attention back to my brother.

“Hey... Kazi is going to grab some water and well try to cool you down okay? You're going to be fine.” I said, gently rubbing his shoulder.

It was a few minutes before Kazakhstan came back with the things I'd asked for.

“Thanks.” I said to him, helping Uke sit up and giving him some water. “Kaz go back downstairs with Bela and get started on your homework. I'll be down in a minute to make dinner.”

He nodded and left as I helped Ukraine finish his water.

I laid him back down and pressed the cool compress to his head, muttering words of comfort and lies as he coughed and shook violently before me.

“I'm going to go make you some soup okay? Get some rest.” I said, slipping off the bed and down the stairs.

I pulled out broth and some vegetables I'd bought the other day. I hummed mentally as I cooked, dad had banned music after mom's passing. She always hummed when she cooked, and would sing us to sleep.

I wished she were here to sing me to sleep every night, just like she used to.

But today, I wished she were here to sing for Uke.

“What are you doing Russia?”

I whirled around at the sound of my father's voice.

“Just making dinner father.” I said quickly, feeling my muscles tense.

“Hm.” He took a few steps towards me, I squeezed the ladle tight in my hands.

“And what's this I heard about your brother being sick?”

I caught the terrified eyes of Belarus and Kazakhstan from their seats on the counter.

“He's just a little tired father, he's not-”

The ladle was ripped from my hands and I held back a scream as he flung the boiling soup at my face.

“Don't ever lie to me again.” He hissed, grabbing the collar of my shirt and pulled me close to his face. “You disgust me.”

He struck the fresh burn on my face as he walked out of the kitchen, I fell to the floor, clutching the left cheek.

I sucked in a hard breath of air as Bela rushed to my side.

“Ruski! Ruski!” She said, kneeling by my side.

“Here.” Kazi said, passing her a bag of frozen peas.

She moved my hand from my face and put on the cold bag.

“Thanks Bela.” I managed a pained smile. “You're the best sister ever.”

She smiled back.

"Okay guys," I said, standing up, still keeping the compress to my face. "Who's hungry?"

"Uke... Ukraine... hey, wake up. I brought dinner." I said, gently waking up my brother.

He groaned and coughed, a shudder raced through his body.

We sat there in silence as I slowly fed him sips of soup, stopping every couple of moments for him to cough.

"Go back to bed now Uke, you need the rest." I said, preparing to leave.

"Russia?" He said, grabbing my hand, letting out a harsh cough.

"Uke?" I replied.

"What happened to your face?"

"It's nothing." I said, turning my head away from the light.

"Dad found out. Didn't he."

"No, it's fine."

"Stop lying Russia. You lie about everything. About me, about dad, about everything being fine..." His voice shook with sickly anger as his eyes began to fill with tears. "I-I'm so sick of it."

"I'm sorry...." I said, looking down at my feet.

"Russia?" He coughed, falling into another fit as I propped him up with another pillow.

"Yes?"

"Russia I'm scared." He said, looking up at me with terror in his eyes, I could see him begin to slip into his memories.

"I know. But you're strong Uke, you've made it through worse. You'll make it through." I kissed his forehead and gave his hand a

squeeze before leaving the room.

I headed into the bathroom and turned on the shower, pulling off my clothes and my leg before sitting on the shower floor and cleaning off the sickness that surrounded me.

Usually, a good shower made me feel better. But not tonight.

I couldn't get Ukraines words out of my head.

"Russia I'm scared."

How sick he was.

"Russia I'm scared."

How I'd almost lost him once.

"Russia I'm-"

"I-i know...." I said pulling my knees to face as I sat alone in the shower.

"I'm scared too."

A/n: So sorry for slow updates!! Thank you so much for understanding and I hope the longer chapter makes up for it. Poor Ukraine, although this story is technically Russia's, Ukraine has his own story to tell. And who knows? Maybe we'll find out what happened to him, behind that door.... Anyways!! Thank you so much for the support on this book, you guys are awesome and I love you. Have a great day/night!

Chapter 6

Chapter 6

My eyes snapped open as I heard a loud cough from the room next door.

Ukraine had been a nightmare. I'd done my best to keep the fever and the coughing down, but nothing I ever did seemed to help.

Another strangled cough pulled me from my thoughts.

"That's it." I muttered, grabbing my leg and ushanka as I headed into Ukraines room.

I quickly opened the door and walked over to him, shaking him.

"Uke wake up." I hissed.

"Mmmmm?" He groaned, his eyes fluttering weakly.

"I need you to help me. Come on, I'll carry you." I said, pulling him into my arms as he clung me.

I felt a scream beg in my throat as the extra weight put pressure on the already too tight prosthetic. I bit my lip hard and took a few staggering steps to the door. I made my way down the stairs as quietly as I could.

Each step was agony, my eyes welled up, threatening to overflow.

I finally made it to the door and my hand froze as I heard a snore. My head slowly turned to see my father passed out, several large bottles of vodka laying around him.

Dead drunk.

I breathed a small sigh of relief as I quietly left out the front door and went out to my car. I laid Uke in the back seat, before getting

into the driver's seat and speeding down the road as fast as I could.

I fumbled and pulled my phone from my pocket.

"Call Stars and Stripes." I said into it.

'Calling Stars and Stripes.' The automated voice responded.

I tapped my fingers nervously as I waited for Ame to pick up.

"Dude....." I heard Ame groan from his end of the phone. "It's like super early.... What the hell do you want....?"

"I need to leave Ukraine at your house. He's not doing well and I.... I don't want dad to take it all out on him. Please Ame." I said, begging. "I know, I've been a horrible boyfriend lately. You can be mad at me for that but I...."

I took a deep breath, trying to swallow down my pride.

"I need your help..." I mumbled quietly.

"Hm? Didn't catch that." Ame replied, in a tone of voice that let me know he definitely heard what I said.

I muttered a few unsavory words in Russian before trying again.

"I. Need. Your. Help." I said clearly into the phone.

"I'll tell mom and Nada. See you in a few." He said, hanging up.

I glanced back at my brother, his eyes squeezed shut as he coughed in pain.

"Hang on buddy.... I'm going to get you somewhere safe..." I said, not sure if I was saying it to me or him.

I pushed on the accelerator a little more, I was getting closer and closer to his house.

I finally swung into the drive, and got out pulling Ukraine from the backseat and into my arms. Canada, America, and France were already waiting for me by the time I got to the front door.

“Come inside, quickly.” France said, inviting us in.

“I'm sorry if I'm bothering you. I just didn't know where else to go.” I said quickly.

“Here I'll take him.” Canada offered. “It can't be good to keep that kind of weight on.”

I saw him try not to glance at the prosthetic that held my shaking leg.

“I'm going to go get some medicine. France said, quickly leaving the front hall.

“Here, be gentle with him.” I said, carefully handing my little brother over to the Canadian.

I watched as he held him gently, tenderly pushing a straw piece of hair from his brow and mutter something softly to him before taking him up the stairs.

It hit me.

Canada truly cared about my brother.

More than a simple friendship.

I felt someone place a hand on my arm.

“Hey...”

It was Ame.

I turned to him as he pulled me into his arms.

“I'm sorry about Ukraine.” He said gently. “But thanks for letting me help.”

“Don't let it go to your head.” I laughed weakly.

“Haha... too late.” He teased back.

He pulled out of the embrace and traced his hand up to my face

and felt around the edge of my cheek as I stared down into his dark shades.

I often wondered what his eyes looked like behind them. I remembered what color they were before the accident. They were blue, like the ocean. 'From sea to shining sea.' as America had said to me when we were young.

"Are you going to stay the night?" Ame asked, distracting me from my memories.

"I can't. I can't leave Bela and Kazi alone with my dad. You know that." I sighed.

"Yeah I know." He tilted his head down, clearly disappointed. "It's just... you never have time for me anymore... I..."

I watched him bite his lip and take a deep breath.

"I miss you."

I felt horrible.

I'd been neglecting him all this time. Pushing him away. Leaving him behind.

I wasn't supposed to do that. I promised I wouldn't do that. Not after what he'd told me...

"I miss you too." I said softly. "I'm sorry. I um, I love you."

Those words were so simple, yet I always had a hard time getting them out.

"I love you too." He smiled, popping up on his tiptoes to kiss my lips.

I smiled slightly as I kissed him back. "You're such a hot kisser you know that." I smirked as we pulled back.

I watched him blush slightly at the comment.

“Shut it Commie.” He said, turning his head away.

“Whatever Stripes.” I chuckled. “I’ll see you tomorrow okay? And thank you.”

I kissed the top of his forehead.

“I’ll see you tomorrow too.” He grinned.

I gave his hand a quick squeeze before walking out the door and back into the car.

It didn't feel right to be going to school without my younger brother by my side.

Bela and Kazi had asked about him that morning, I didn't tell them what was going on, they didn't need the stress, though I suspected Kazi knew what was going on. He was much more sharper minded and observant then he appeared.

I sat between Ame and Germany that day at lunch, picking at the small half sandwich I'd managed to snag that morning before dropping the kids off.

“You should eat.” Germany commented.

“Not super hungry.” I replied.

“Hmmm...” Germany gave me a look, but didn't say anything further on the subject.

“Hey where's Canada?” I asked, turning to Ame. “He’s usually here by now.”

“Oh he stayed him to take care of Ukraine. He hasn't left his side since you brought him over.” He replied, taking a bite of his hamburger.

“What?!” I exclaimed. “He doesn't need to do that! Ukraine is not his responsibility. He's mine.”

The others shrunk back at my sudden outburst, except for Ame, who was pretty much immune to them at this point.

“You’re not the only one who cares about Ukraine you know. Nada and Ukraine are super close incase you havent noticed. Canada really cares about him, like, alot.” Ame retorted.

“Like... in that way?” I asked quietly.

He nodded.

“Ah.. shi- um... I didn't know.” I said, feeling really bad about it.

“Mmmhmm...” Ame nodded again, knowingly.

“Ukraine, also shares... similar feelings... Do they know?” I asked.

“Nope.” Ame grinned.

I chuckled slightly.

“Oh wow...”

“I know right? We can definitely tease our little brothers about this.”

“Definitely.” I agreed. “High five?”

He smacked me in the face.

“Um... I think I missed it.” He said, looking slightly embarrassed.

“I think I'll high five you next time.” I chuckled softly.

“Good idea.” He replied.

The bell rang, lunch was over.

“Me and Nada will send updates okay?” Ame said as we got out of the table and started walking down the hall. “And you can come see him if you want. He seems to be doing better than yesterday. Still hasn't woken up yet.”

“Thank you so much.” I said, as we parted ways into the classrooms.

I pulled up to the pick up spot at the middle school to pick up the kids, I was ready to get home and call Ame, I really wanted updates.

Only Bela got in the car.

“Where's Kazi?” I asked with a frown.

“He's coming...” She said softly.

“Bela? Where is your brother?” I asked, giving her a hard look.

“He got in trouble.” She muttered.

“What was that?” I asked.

“He got in trouble.” She said, much louder. “The principal is going to walk him out to the car.”

Sure enough, a few moments later the principal walked out with my little brother in tow.

“Is there a problem?” I asked, rolling down the window as Kazi got into the back seat.

“I'm sure you are aware your brother is, um, how to put it nicely. *Special.*” She started.

I sucked in a harsh breath..

“He got stuck in some of our gym equipment today. Getting him out was a process. It caused a disturbance to the other students. We would really prefer to not have these kinds of issues in the future.” She said, in a sickly sweet tone.

“Oh I agree.” I said, my voice steely cool.

I glared at the woman intensely.

"He shouldn't be a distraction. You should tell your students to mind their own damn business and not screw with my brother. And yeah, my brother has wings, so what? He's still a kid and one of your students. Don't you dare start calling him, 'Special'. He's normal, and deserves to be treated as such. The only one with an issue here is you. Good day ma'am." I said, speeding off and leaving her in a stunned silence.

"Ruski..." Kazi said quietly. "You didn't have to do that."

"Yes I did. If anything like that happens again, you tell me okay?" I said, giving him a serious look.

"But-"

"No." I snapped.

I saw his wings tense up and he suddenly looked very nervous.

"I'm sorry..." I said, running my fingers through my hair. "I didn't mean to snap..."

He just nodded and looked out the window, Bela looked silently in her lap.

'I didn't mean to snap.....'

Dad had said the same thing the first time he'd hit Kazi...

I helped the kids with their homework, Dad wasn't home yet, so I didn't have to worry about him asking about Uke.

"Thank you for doing your homework. You two go get cleaned up, I'll make dinner okay?" I said, shooing them up the stairs.

I looked through the pantry until I found some pasta. I began to boil the water and checked my phone while I waited.

Commie Child: Updates?

Stars and Stripes: He's still asleep. Uke said he woke up at one

point, but he didn't speak English so we couldn't understand him before he passed back out. Mom said his fever went down quite a bit so he's on the right track. How are you holding up?

Commie Child: I'm fine. Thanks for updating me.

I heard the front door open and heavy foot steps enter the kitchen area. I quickly slipped my phone into my pocket before he could see.

"Hello Father." I said, greeting the large man as he sauntered towards me.

"Where is it." He growled. "Where the hell is it??"

I stepped back.

"Where's what? I don't know what you're talking about!" I said quickly, confused.

He grabbed the collar of my shirt and landed a hard punch on my lower jaw. I tasted the slight metallic taste of blood in my mouth.

"Where. Is. The. Photograph?" He asked slowly, threateningly.

And then it clicked.

"Okay I'll help." I said, taking the backpack from her. "Jeez Bela, what's all this stuff for?"

"School project!" She grinned.

"Okay, please tell me you aren't taking anything you're not supposed to." I said, giving her a look.

Bela had taken the photograph for her school project.

It was the last picture we had of mom.

Before she died.

"I-" I started.

"I-I have it...." A small voice said behind us.

"Bela no...." I whispered, looking down at my little sister who was clutching the picture frame in her hands.

"What were you thinking sweetie? You know Daddy doesn't like it when you take his stuff." His voice dripped with honey, but his threatening tone stung every word.

He grabbed the picture from her small hands and grasped her arm tightly in his.

I saw Kazi rush down the stairs and look at the scene in horror.

My father bent down to be eye level with Bela and struck her hard across the face.

"Now I'm going to teach you what happens when you mess with my stuff. Let's go to Daddy's office and talk this out." He said dragging her away.

My mind flashed to the last time Dad had taken someone into his office.

Ukraines screams and pounding played over and over in my mind.

"No!" I yelled rushing forward and tackling my dad to the floor.

Bela screamed and pulled away from him as I pinned him to the ground.

"I won't let you hurt her!" I yelled, punching him in the face.

"You ungrateful-" He yelled, grabbing my neck and squeezing it right.

I tried to scream but nothing came out as he dug his thumbs into my trachea.

He stood up, dragging me with him by the neck.

"You think you can pull things like that? You think you can attack me?" He roared, slamming my head against the wall.

I couldn't respond.

I could hear my siblings cry out in fear as my head was once again slammed into the wall.

More screams.

Slam.

My vision blurred.

Slam.

Yelling.

Slam.

Blood.

Slam.

Black.

A/n: Cliffhanger!!

Ahh sorry for not posting sooner!! I've been working on this bit by bit all week so I could have it up asap. Thank you for being so patient with me!!

Hope y'all liked the chapter, and have a great day/night!

Chapter 7

Chapter 7

"Russia! Run!"

I saw the planes rush overhead.

They were so big.

"It's coming down!" I giggled.

I'd always wanted to see a plane up close.

"Russia!"

It was so close to me... coming down to say hi....

"RUSSIA!!!"

"Ah!" I yelled, bolting upright in bed.

I immediately was filled with regret as my head was filled with searing pain.

I closed my eyes and took a few deep breaths to steady myself.

I slowly opened my eyes and looked around the room. It was bigger than my room, the bed was much more comfortable, and the blinds were drawn closed.

I wasn't in my room.

The door opened to my left and I saw And quietly open the door and slip himself into the room I was in.

"Ame?" I said in confusion.

He yelped and whirled around.

"Rus! Don't scare me like that!" He said, clearly startled.

"Sorry..." I said quietly. "What's going on? Where am I? Why does my head hurt so much?"

"I think your siblings can explain better than I can..." He replied, feeling for the door handle and opening it wider.

"Hey! Russia's awake!" He called down the hall.

I heard the pounding of feet as my little brother and sister rushed into the room.

"Ruski!" Bela cried, throwing herself into my arms and sobbing.

"Whoa there Bela-roo! I'm okay! It's okay!" I said, hugging her tight.

"B-but it's all m-my fault..." She cried harder. "I-if I h-hadnt taken it...."

"Shh...." I said, gently stroking her hair. "We're okay.... We're safe... I don't blame you for what happened... well um... whatever happened. I don't really remember."

Kazakhstan slowly sat down at the end of my bed and took in a shaky breath.

"Bela took the picture... you know which one..." He said, glancing at Ame and now France, who had just entered the room. "And Dad got mad... and he- well um..."

His voice trailed off and his wings began to twitch.

"He knocked me out again?" I said, sitting up and taking Kazi's hand. "Is that what happened?"

He nodded.

"And then Dad yelled at us and...." He took another slow breath and rubbed the bandage on his arm. "He eventually left. He said he was going on his 'private trip', the one he takes with Mr. Nazi and Mrs. Japanese Empire. So once I was sure he was out of the house, I took your phone and called America. I-I didn't know what else to

do. Mrs. France picked us up and took us here to take care of you. That was two days ago.”

“Two days?” I exclaimed in shock, the longest I’d even been out was about thirty hours, but never two whole days.

“Also wait- how did you call Ame? I have a password.”

“I uh.. I know it.” He said, looking down.

“Hey how come he gets to know it but not me?” Said a voice from the door.

I glanced up.

“Uke?” I said, smiling at my brother who had just entered with Canada and was holding his hand. “Nice.”

I winked at him, making him blush.

“Huh?” Canada looked between the two of us in confusion.

“Nothing.” Ukraine said, glaring at me. “Glad to see you’re alive.”

“You too.” I replied. “You had me almost worried for a sec.”

“Yeah same.”

There was an awkward pause between us, we weren’t the most affectionate siblings in front of a crowd.

“Well!” France said breaking the silence. “Im very glad you boys are doing so well. Why don’t we get some breakfast? I’ll make crepes. Russia, you stay put, I don’t want you up for at least another day.”

France exited the room, Bela following close behind.

“Come on, Mom makes really good crepes. I like to put maple syrup on mine.” Canada said to Uke, pulling him gently out of the room.

Kazi gave me a hesitant look and squeezed his hand, giving him

reassurance it was okay to go. He gave me a quick hug before hurrying off to catch up with Bela and France.

“Looks like it's just you and me.” Ame said, making his way to the bed and planting himself next to me.

“Seems so.” I smiled, putting an arm around him and he curled in close.

We stayed there for a few minutes in the silence, just holding each other and feeling each other's warmth.

“Rus... um.... I'm really glad you woke up.” Ame said softly.

“Me too.” I smiled, kissing his cheek.

“Russia please don't go back. Please. It's hell to hear about what happens to you in that house, don't go back.” He sputtered quickly.

“Who tells you what goes on in that house? I mean- what are you talking about?” I asked, taken back slightly by the outburst.

“Russia your siblings wake up screaming and shaking every night. Ukraine is the worst. Canada is the only one that has been able to stop it. Everytime they wake up, they're always talking about your dad.”

“Oh....” I said slowly.

“Rus....I....I can't lose you.” He said, his face scrunching up, I figured he was closing his eyes tightly beneath the shades. “I really can't...”

“You're not going to lose me.” I said, pulling him close and kissing him passionately. “You're not ever getting rid of me Stripes.”

I went to kiss him again but the door slammed open.

“Hi Ame!” New Zealand said, holding plates of food.

“Shi- Z!! Learn to knock!” Ame yelled blushing. “Im busy!”

“Oh hi Russia!” He waved, grinning mischievously. “Mom sent me up with food.”

New Zealand walked over and handed us plates.

“Are there red, white, and blue sprinkles on these?” Ame asked, making a face. “I can taste the difference.”

“Yup.” New Zealand nodded. “I made sure of it. Anyways I’ll give you two some privacy.”

He gave me a wink as he left the room.

“Okay are the sprinkles actually red, white, and blue?” Ame asked, picking at them with the fork.

“Yeah.” I said, looking at the sprinkled crepes.

“Thank you.” He said, looking satisfied as he took a bite. “Mom thinks just because I can’t see anymore she can just get away with everything. It’s pretty annoying actually.”

“Mhm..” I said, taking a bite of my own crepes. “Can’t imagine.”

“Hey did you ever get a new leg?”

“Hm? Oh. No...” I said, glancing down at the old prosthetic that someone had taken off and put on the floor. “Wait a sec, who took it off?”

“I did. Duh. Didn’t think you wanted anyone else touching it.” Ame said simply. “It feels way too small. Do you want me to buy you a new one? Its no a problem. I know you’re probably a little low on cash...”

“Im fine.” I snapped slightly. “It’s not a big deal.

“Hey don’t get mad at me.” He said back. “I’m just trying to help.”

“I know.” I sighed, finishing off my food and putting the plate on the nightstand next to me.

"Wow you eat really fast."

"I... guess I was hungry."

"Want more?"

"No, I'm okay."

"Once I finish do you just want to cuddle and make out like, all day?"

"Oh hell yes."

We ended up staying over at Ames house for two days.

It was nice to see my siblings eating, getting enough sleep, and just being taken care of, even if it was just for a bit.

I still felt awkward about the whole thing, I wasn't used to adults being so kind and not worrying about my dad barging in every two seconds.

"I wish we could stay..." Uke said, flopping down on our couch as I finished putting the rest of the groceries away.

"What? So you can go sneak off with your new boyfriend." I teased.

"He- I- He's not my boyfriend!" Uke said, blushing.

"Sureeee he isn't." I chuckled.

"Ukie has a boyfriend?" Bela said, walking into the kitchen, beaming at me.

"No. I don't. Rus is lying." He said, folding his arms.

"Whatever you say, Uke." I replied as Kazi looked up from his book to watch the banter and gave him a wink, making him smile a little.

I shut the fridge with a satisfactory smile. Dad was out on his trip

which meant we had nothing to worry about.

Once or twice a year, Dad, Nazi, and Japanese Empire would go out somewhere for a few days. No one knew what they did on those trips.

Even though the war had ended forever ago, they still met up sometimes. It didn't make much sense to me, since Dad had had a falling out with Nazi during the fight. But I didn't really care, so long as Dad was out of the house and my siblings were safe.

"Alright it's getting late guys. Bed time soon." I announced it to the group.

"Dad's not even home Rus. I'm staying up." Uke said, ignoring me.

"Me too!" Bela said defiantly.

Kazi looked at me expectantly.

"Fine...." I said, giving in. "One hour extra. That's it. Only because it's the weekend."

"Yes!" Bela said excitedly, pumping her fist in the air.

I smiled slightly.

The kids had been so good all week, especially with still going to school while I was out. I'd found out from Ame that France had taken Bela and Kazi to school each day and Ame and Canada had insisted to stay with me and Uke while we recovered.

"Can we make cookies?" Bela asked, looking at me pleadingly. "Pleaseee?"

"Sure. Go grab the recipe." I said, starting to pull out the ingredients while she raced off to go find it.

She hurried back in a few moments later, recipe in hand.

"Got it!" She announced.

"Alright, ready to get started?"

"I think I'm going to be sick." Bela said, putting her face in her arms as she leaned on the table.

"That's what you get for eating so many." I chuckled, clearing her empty plate. "Now it's been longer than an hour so you need to hurry up stairs and sleep. I don't need you all grumpy and off schedule in the morning."

She groaned and looked over at Kazi.

"Carry me?" She asked.

"No way." Kazi replied, sticking his tongue out at her.

I blinked in surprise, I forgot how childish Kazi could be sometimes when Dad wasn't around.

Kazi caught my surprised look and gave me a sheepish smile before following Bela out of the kitchen to go to bed.

I just smiled to myself and shook my head.

"Don't mind if I do." Uke said entering the room, popping up on the counter and grabbing a cookie off the tray.

"Don't have too many or you'll feel sick like your sister." I said.

He shrugged and took a bite, chewing slowly.

"Remember when we used to make these with Mom...." He said quietly.

"Yeah..." I said, smiling at the memories. "I loved helping her out."

"You never let me put in the chocolate chips."

"I still don't let you put in the chocolate chips." I replied. "Mom said that was my job."

"*One time* Russia. She said you could put them in *one time*." Uke

huffed.

"So? Still my job." I said, taking a cookie off the tray and popping the whole thing in my mouth.

"I wish I remembered more of her." Uke said after a few moments of silence. "I wish she was here."

"Me too." I sighed.

"I wish she was here to stop Dad. She was always here to put a stop to things when they got bad..."

"Hey, me too." I said, putting a hand on his shoulder, trying to make him feel better. "But hey, lighten up. We've got each other. And now, there's one thing she can't stop me from doing."

"What?" Uke asked, cocking his head in confusion.

"This!" I grinned, snatching the cookie from his hands and popping it into my mouth.

"Russia!"

A/n: Wow that is the least depressing chapter I think I've ever written for this book and I don't know how to feel about it. Sorry it's a little on the short side, I've been trying to pace myself better on these chapters and now I have a bunch of free time due to the quarantine so that means more chapters! Yay! Hope y'all have a great day/night!!

Chapter 8

Chapter 8

"Wake up sleepyhead!"

I smacked the pillow down on Ukraines face.

"OW!" Uke yelled, shooting straight up in bed. "COULD YOU NOT FOR ONCE?"

I laughed and tossed him back the pillow.

"Come on! I let you sleep in! Plus everyone's ready and we're getting in the car soon." I said, heading for the door.

"Ugh where are we going?" He asked, rubbing the side of his face.

"I'm going on a date with Ame, I'm dropping you off at Canada's, Bela is going to Aunt Czechoslovakia's and Kazi is going over to Poland's for flight lessons." I replied. "Now throw on something decent. Breakfast is down stairs."

I made my way slowly down the stairs and into the kitchen where my younger two siblings were putting away their dishes and getting ready to leave.

"Are you guys excited for today?" I asked, feeling more relaxed then I'd ever felt in a long time.

"Yes!" Bela smiled, hugging me around the waist.

I hugged her back and looked over at my younger brother.

Kazi gave me a small smile and a nod.

"Okay get in the car, I'll meet you there in a sec." I said, walking over to and grabbing an apple and some toast for Uke.

He tromped down the stairs a few minutes later, dressed and ready.

“Here.” I said, passing him his food. “Lets go.”

“Could you stop being horny for your boyfriend for like, two seconds?” He grumbled, grabbing his shoes and following me out to the car.

I ignored him as we started the drive to Poland's house.

Now I wouldn't say me and Poland were close, hell we were barely even friends, but he was a quiet guy and I kinda liked him. There had been rumors surrounding him and my dad for years, but I chose to ignore them. I wasn't one to judge, especially with all the rumors about me.

“Okay Kazi, I'll walk you up.” I said, pulling into the driveway.

Me and Kazi headed up to the front door, as we reached it, Kazi stopped in his tracks.

“Kaz? What is it?” I asked in concern.

“I don't know if I can do this...” He said, looking up at me nervously. “I don't think I'm strong enough to fly.”

“Hey...” I said, gently, putting my hands on his shoulder. “I know it's new and scary for you, but you're strong Kazi. Super strong. And I believe, one day, you'll fly. And it will be amazing and you'll be the best flier in the world. Okay?”

“Okay..” He replied, a little less uncertain.

I walked up and knocked on the large door of Poland's house.

I waited a few moments until Poland opened the door.

“Hey Poland.” I said.

“Hi Russia.” He said, shyly. “Is this Kazakhstan?”

“Yup. This is my little brother.” I said, giving his hair a little ruffle as he gave Poland a little wave. “Thanks for offering to teach him how to fly.”

“Anytime.” He smiled. “Flying is hard. I wish someone had been there for me when I learned. You can come inside now.”

“Make sure you behave and train hard. I’ll see you in a few hours.” I said, giving him a light nudge. “Got it.”

Kazi smiled and gave me a thumbs up. Poland gave us a little nod as Kaz went into the house and I went back to the car.

“Next stop is for you Bela.” I smiled at her from the review.

“Yesssss.” She grinned as I pulled out of the drive and back onto the road.

Luckily, my Aunt lived one neighborhood over, and in the same one as Ame. It was only a short trip.

I pulled up to her house, where she was already waiting for us.

“Aunt Czechoslovakia!” Belarus said excitedly, hopping out of the car and running into her arms.

I smiled slightly at the sight.

My Aunt had become almost a mom to the younger ones, even if we didn't get to see her that often. And Bela loved having another female around that she could talk to. I guess us boys just didn't do it for her all the time.

Aunt Czechoslovakia picked her up in her arms and walked over to my open window to talk to me.

“Hey Aunt Czecho.” I said as she approached.

“Hi Ruski. Hi Ukraine.” She nodded to my younger brother in the passenger seat. “How have you two been?”

“Good.” We both reliped.

“Well good.” She smiled in satisfaction and turned her attention back to me.

“Thanks for letting me have Bela for the day.”

“Sure thing.” I replied.

“You take care of yourself okay?” She said gently, but a look of seriousness lingered in her eyes. “I’ll see you boys in a few hours.”

She leaned over and kissed my cheek before taking Bela inside the house.

“You ready to see Canada?” I asked Ukraine, winking at him.

“Russia! It’s not like that and you know that! Plus I’m not even sure if he likes boys... much less me...” He sighed.

I tried not to laugh, not wanting to give away that I knew exactly how they both felt.

“Okay okay. I’ll drop it.” I said, holding back a smile.

“I can see you trying not to smile.” He huffed, folding his arms.

“Mhm whatever you say.” I said, grinning.

“Doesn’t matter, we’re here now, go and see him. And tell Ame to get out here asap!” I yelled to him as he hopped out of the car and to the house.

I tapped my fingers on the steering wheel while I waited for him to finally get out of the house and make his way into the car.

“So wait, what are we doing today?” Ame asked, throwing his cane in the back seat as I drove out of the driveway.

“You’ll have to see.” I grinned, kissing him and hitting my foot on the accelerator.

“Whoa! Russia! Slow down!” He yelled as I sped the car way over

the legal limit. "You're going to crash!"

I laughed and slowed down a little.

"Oh calm down Ame! I thought you liked a little action." I teased.

"Well I do. I just don't trust bad drivers." He replied. "And you're a terrible driver. I'd be a better driver than you."

"Sure you would." I said, rolling my eyes.

"Anyways where are we going?" He asked.

"Told you you'd have to wait." I replied. "We're almost there anyways."

"So what's in the back?" Ame asked. "It smells good."

"Huh? Oh. I figured we'd have a picnic." I shrugged. "Wow I completely forgot how good your sense of smell is."

"It's so good I can smell a hamburger from a mile away."

"What no you can't. That's impossible."

"Try me Commie."

"Bring it Stripes."

I pulled the car off to into the grass at the base of a large hill.

"I'm guessing we're here now? Unless you're such a bad driver that your car decided it didn't like you anymore." Ame said.

"Oh haha get out." I said, passing him his cane from the back and hopping out of the car and to the back to grab the food.

I grabbed the basket in one hand and Ames hand in the other.

We headed up the hill and lay down on the grass, feeding each other bites of food and laughing and talking the whole time.

As the morning turned into afternoon and the sun deepened it was

down towards the horizon. I lay at the base of a large oak tree, Ame resting on my chest.

“Was this a good date?” I asked softly, stroking his hair.

“Definitely. We should plan another one soon.” Ame replied, shifting his arms to wrap them around me. “Ugh how are you so comfortable?”

“I just am.” I chuckled lightly.

My phone buzzed in my pocket.

“Phone? Or just happy to be with me?” Ame smirked.

“Oh hush.” I said, blushing slightly at the innuendo.

I checked my phone, it was just an email notification. I never checked my email.

“Shoot, it's getting kind of late.” I sighed. “We should go.”

“Mmmmm I don't want to go.” He moaned, holding me tighter.

“Come on you big baby.” I said, kissing the top of his head. “Let go..”

We packed up our stuff and headed back down the hill and got back into the car, driving back to his house.

“Here.” I said, pulling up Canada's contact on my phone and pressing ‘Call’. “Can you tell Canada to tell Uke that we're on our way?”

“Got it.” He nodded, taking the phone from me. “Yeah? It's Ame. Yeah. Mhm. We're on our way. Huh? What! No! Oh. Well don't tell Mom! Okay. Yeah. Okay. See ya. Bye.”

He passed it back to me and I hung up.

“Thanks.” I said.

“Anytime.” I replied.

We drove for a little while longer until I pulled up on the curb.

“I had a great time today.” Ame said, leaning over and kissing me.

I kissed him back, pulling him close to me.

“I love you.” I whispered.

“I love you too.” He said, kissing me again. “See you tomorrow?”

“See you tomorrow.”

Ame smiled again and got out of the car, Ukraine getting in a few minutes later.

“Sooooo? How was it?” I smirked at my little brother as I pulled out and on to the road.

“It was fine.” He said, his cheeks reddening.

“Mhm. Glad you had a good time.”

My phone began to ring in my pocket.

“Hello?” I said, picking it up.

“Hi Russia. It's Poland.” Said the voice on the phone.

“Oh hey Poland, I-”

“Listen. I'm at your house... well.. Um... it's kind of complicated...you need to come fast.”

“I'm on my way.” I said, hanging up and hitting the gas.

“Whoa wait what's happening?” Uke asked, his voice rising in concern.

“I... I don't know. Poland called, he said we needed to come fast. I swear if anything happened to Kazi...” I said, feeling panic growing in my chest.

My heart pulsed hard in my chest as I pulled up into our street.

My heart sank as I saw dad's car in the driveway.

I could hear sirens in the distance.

Then it hit me.

Our house was on fire.

A/n: Oh? Cliffhanger? Oops. ;)

Chapter 9

Chapter 9

Kazakhstans POV (1st Person)

“It's okay Kazakhstan.... Take your time.” Poland coached gently.

My wings twitched nervously as I looked off the edge of the small cliff and down into the sand pit.

“What if I fall again?” I asked, turning to face the red and white faced country.

“Well you’ve already fallen once before right?” Poland replied, walking towards me. “You already know what it feels like. I know it's scary, trust me, I’ve been through it before.”

“Okay...” I said, still feeling uncertain.

I gulped as I looked over the edge and Poland stepped back. I couldn't do this. I was too scared. I wanted Russia. He always knew how to make me feel better.

I took a few steps back for a running start. My wings stretched away from my sides. I could feel them aching for action.

“3...2...1...” I muttered, my feet pounding across the grass as I leaped off the edge of the cliff.

I pushed my wings further out and flapped them hard, but it wasn't enough.

I shrieked as my wings gave out and I smacked into the sand at the bottom.

“Kazakhstan!” I heard Poland call out as he landed gracefully next to me. “Are you alright?”

I nodded as he placed a gentle hand on my arm and helped me up.

"I think we should stop for today. We've worked your wings more than they've ever been worked in the past." Poland said.

I nodded as we climbed out from the sand pit.

"I'll take you home now." Poland said, starting away from the cliff.

I paused, looking back at the edge.

"I don't know if I can do this..." I said, looking up at him nervously, my stomach starting to twist in anticipation. "I don't think I'm strong enough to fly."

"Hey..." Russia said, gently, putting his hands on my shoulder and giving me his strong, reassuring smile. "I know it's new and scary for you, but you're strong Kazi. Super strong. And I believe, one day, you'll fly. And it will be amazing and you'll be the best flier in the world..."

"Wait." I said, feeling shy as he turned to look at me. "Can I try... one more time?"

"Okay. One more time." Poland smiled softly. "Remember, deep breaths."

"Deep breaths.." I muttered getting into position, stretching out my wings once again. "I can do this.. Deep breaths..."

I ran forward as fast as I could, feeling the wind tickle my feathers as I picked up speed. And then I closed my eyes left.

"You're doing it!" Poland yelled. "Keep it up!"

I opened my eyes and found myself up in the air. My fragile wings pounding and gilding to the beating of my heart. I felt a rush of air to my left as Poland flew next to me.

"I-I did it!" I yelled, trying to keep myself steady. "I did it!"

“Take my hand!” Poland said holding his hand out as I grabbed it. “We’re going to turn around now. Lift up those edge feathers on the left side.”

It was wobbly work but we managed to turn, gliding higher as the current pulled us up higher into the air.

“Can we fly back to my house?” I asked over the wind.

“Do you think you can hold it?” He replied.

I nodded.

For the first time in my life, I felt like I could do anything.

We soared over tops of trees and narrowly avoided several telephone poles.

“Okay we’re going to land a street over okay? There’s more room to land.” Poland yelled over the air.

“Okay.” I called back.

He pulled us down and let go of my hand and landed. I tried to copy but fell on my face instead.

“I don’t know if I can do this...” He said, looking up at me nervously. “I don’t think I’m strong enough to fly.”

“Kazakhstan!”

“Im okay!” I said, getting up and brushing myself off. “That was amazing! Thank you.”

“You’re welcome. Not bad for a first flight.” He smiled. “Well walk the rest of the way over.”

I nodded and looked up at the sky, I could see smoke up above. I wondered where it was coming from.

Maybe a campfire? Or a cookout?

We turned the corner and I realized where the smoke was coming

from.

It was coming from my house.

We stopped dead in our tracks.

“I’m calling your brother, don’t move.” Poland said, pulling out his phone and calling Russia.

I just stared at the flames rising up in my house, climbing through the windows and filling the sky with smoke.

“Hi Russia. It’s Poland.” Poland said into the phone. “Listen. I’m at your house... well.. Um... you need to come fast.”

He hung up and looked at me, I could see the uncertainty in his eyes.

“Kazakhstan I-”

We heard the roaring of an old engine tearing up the roads and swinging into the street. Our car.

I raced after it as it stopped in front of our house, ignoring Poland’s calls.

Russia stepped out and I could see him looking at the steadily growing damage.

“Russia!” I cried, grabbing his hand.

“Kazi... Kaz...” He said, pulling me into a tight hug. “Are you okay? Are you hurt?”

I shook my head into his arm.

He pulled away, inspecting me for damage, I saw Ukraine getting out of the car out of the corner of my eye.

“Why is dad’s car here?” Ukraine said, looking at the car that hasn’t been here a few hours ago.

“Dad...” I heard Russia mutter, looking at the burning building.

“Russia doesn't.” Ukraine said, he looked at Russia harshly, but I could still see the fear in his eyes.

Russia looked between the two of us for a moment as the house let out a large creak, tearing his gaze away and back to the house. I could hear the sirens stopping behind us.

“Im sorry... someone has to help...” Russia said, not looking back at us as he raced into the flames.

“RUSSIA!!” Ukraine screamed trying to run forwards but was held back by one of the fire fighters that had just arrived.

The whole world seemed to go in slow motion.

I saw Ukraine screaming Russia's name, fighting to get free, fear in his eyes, tears streaming down his face.

I could hear firemen yelling, sirens blaring over the roaring flames. I could feel the heat rising and my heart pounding.

I took a step forward but I was held back too.

I sank to my knees.

“R-russia..” I said weakly, squeezing my eyes shut to block out the tears.

No one could hear me.

Russia was my big brother. My protector. The only one who had ever cared for me. The only one who didn't call me a freak. The only person who could see me for me.

I opened my eyes just in time to see Russia's soot stricken face in the window. My dad in his arms.

He looked at me.

The world was still for a moment.

And then the walls crashed down on top of them.

A/n: Ohhhhh Kazakhstans POV... bet y'all didn't see that coming.

Chapter 10

Chapter 10

Belarus's POV (1st Person)

"Oh! What about this one?" I said, pulling out the old aviator helmet.

"That's the last one I wore before the war ended." Aunt Czechoslovakia replied.

"The one dad was in? Was dad on your side? Dad doesn't talk about it. Will you tell me everything?" I asked, leaning in excitedly.

"Um..." Her facial expression changed.

Her phone rang loudly in her pocket.

"One moment sweetie." She replied with a small smile, before pulling her phone out and taking a few steps out of the room.

I played with the helmet in my hands for a few moments before putting it back in the box.

I was very happy to be at my aunt's house, she was always very nice to me and would tell me stories about mom if I was good. She never told me any about dad though. I didn't understand why.

Dad wasn't a bad person. He just got angry sometimes.

I walked into the kitchen to grab another cookie from the batch me and Aunt Czechoslovakia had made earlier and my hand froze over to the cookie plate when I heard what she was saying.

"Russia is what....? Are Ukraine and Kazakhstan there?" Czechoslovakia said worriedly into the phone, pacing the floor.

My big brothers...? Why was she talking about them? Why was she so upset?

“Their Dad...? Is he...? Oh... I-I see...” She sighed into the phone, running her fingers through her long white hair.

I slowly walked towards her, I had to know what was going on. I had to make sure my family was okay.

“Yes... yes.. I understand sir. Of course. Yes. I have their sister here with me. We’re on our way.” Czechoslovakia said, quickly closing the phone and taking a deep breath.

“Whats going on?” I asked, cocking my head. “Is my family okay?”

“We’re... going to take a little road trip okay? Your siblings well.. I’ll explain when we get there okay?” She said sweetly, but I think she seemed very worried.

I was quickly herded out to the car and my aunt started driving very quickly. Well, quicker than usual.

Her hands gripped the steering wheel tightly. Dad did that when he was mad.

Was she going to hit me?

I fought with the hem of my skirt for a few minutes as we drove in silence.

“Aunt Czechoslovakia?” I asked, cautiously. “Whats going on?”

She took a deep breath and glanced over at me.

“There was a small accident that happened at your house. I don’t have all the details but your family has been taken to the hospital. I’m driving you over and well check things out okay?”

I felt my heart starting to beat faster in my chest. I knew Ukraine didn’t like hospitals because he got sick and mom died in one. They were like bad luck. I just didn’t want to lose them.

I squeezed the hem of my skirt tighter in my fist. The car ride seemed to go on forever.

Aunt Czechoslovakia and I got out of the car and I slipped her hand into mine. I wish it was Russia's hand. He always knew how to make me feel better.

We stepped through the hospital doors and my aunt talked to the lady at the front desk for what felt like hours. My eyes wandered around the room and my ears drowned out whatever they were talking about.

We were rushed down hallways, doctors were saying big words to us and my aunts face grew paler and paler and I grew more and more frustrated with not understanding what was going on.

The doctors lead us down the final hall where I saw my brother laying out on a stretcher bed.

There was blood running down his face and hands, I could see the burn marks on his skin.

I let go and ran towards him.

“Ruski!” I yelled. “Ruski!”

I ducked past the staff and reached out to take Russia's hand.

One of the doctors and nurses grabbed me just before I could take it.

“Russia!” I screamed, trying to kick my way out. “Let go!”

I was whisked out of the room but I couldn't stop screaming his name. I wanted my big brother. I was scared. I wanted Russia. I wanted Russia.

“Put me down! Russia! Help! Let me go!” I howled, kicking and flailing harder and harder.

“You two need to keep an eye on her.” The doctor said as I was pushed into a room and shutting the door.

“Let me out!” I sobbed, pounding on the door.

“Bela stop screaming.”

I whirled around to see Kazi and Ukie sitting next to each other on hard plastic chairs.

“Kazi! Ukie!” I cried, throwing myself into their arms. “Whats going on?”

“The house burned down and Russia and Dad were inside.” Kazi replied, I pulled back, I could see his eyes filled up with tears, but he pushed them away.

I looked over at Ukie for confirmation but he looked out into empty space, he wasn't in the mood to talk.

I looked at the floor, trying to process.

“U-ukie? Can you hold me?” I asked quietly.

He looked over at me.

I couldn't read his face.

“Fine.” He finally replied after a few minutes of silence.

I curled up into his lap, trying to be careful of the burn marks that scarred his arms and legs.

I sniffed a few times, trying to calm my tears.

Russia would want me to be strong.

“Uke?”

“Yeah?”

“Is Russia going to die?”

A/n: Shorter chapter, I know. But stick with me. These next few chapters are going to be quite the ride.

**Also writing from Belas innocent perspective was so hard
ahhhh.**

Chapter 11

Chapter 11

Ukraines POV

“Your father's awake.”

I looked up at the nurse from my seat in the waiting room.

“Would you like to see him?” She asked kindly.

I shook my head.

“Is Rus- my brother awake?” I asked slowly.

“Not yet, but I’m sure he’ll be up soon. Are you sure you don't want to see your father?” She replied.

“No thanks...” I sighed, leaning my head against the wall.

She nodded and left.

I could feel tears threatening to fall from my eyes. I pushed them back. Russia didn't cry, so neither would I.

I looked down at Kazakhstan and Belarus passed out in my lap. Bela had finally stopped screaming and crying a few hours ago and Kazi was still coming out of shock. It wasn't fair.

It just wasn't fair. My father was awake, and Russia was still asleep. Russia should be the one that's okay, not him. He should be dead.

I shifted my arm a little bit so I could be more comfortable, accidentally disturbing Bela.

“Ukie...” She muttered looking up at me. “Is Ruski awake?”

“Not yet Bela. I'm sure he'll be awake soon.” I fake reassured her.

“If Russia doesn't wake up... will you be the big brother and take care of us...?” She asked sleepily, already drifting back off.

I swallowed hard as I tried to push back the feelings that welled up inside of me.

“I-I...” I said, faltering as I realized she'd fallen back asleep.

I breathed a sigh of relief.

How the hell was I supposed to answer that question? I'd already been avoiding it in my own head.

I couldn't be Russia. I just couldn't. He was everything I wasn't. Selfless, caring, the perfect big brother. He didn't run away. But I would. If he didn't wake up I was leaving. I knew it was selfish, but I'd put up with this for so long I didn't care.

My own yawn pulled me from my thoughts.

I wasn't quite sure what the time was, didn't matter, I haven't slept since we got here. And I couldn't afford to fall asleep. Kazi and Bela were depending on me now, Aunt Czechoslovakia had to go home for work and her family, and my brother still hadn't woken up yet.

I yawned again, sleep threatening to take over.

I managed to struggle for a few minutes longer, before I finally gave in to the wave of exhaustion that crashed down on top of me.

“Hey buddy.. You awake?”

I groaned softly and opened my eyes to see the nurse shaking my shoulders.

“Im up... Im up...” I muttered, blinking to adjust to the lights.

“Your brother's awake.” She said gently. “You should wake up your siblings and I'll take you to go see them.”

“Can I go first?” I asked. “I’ll take them later. I just need to see him first.”

“Alright.” She nodded.

I managed to slip from between my siblings and sneak out with the nurse. I could feel my heart picking up pace as she led me down the halls.

“Right in there, I’ll be back in a few minutes.” She said. “Be gentle with him, he just woke up.”

I thanked her and walked in, my heart clenched.

Russia was laying in a white bed, hooked up to several machines, and bandages wrapped around his arms and face. He looked tired and his face had lost a lot of color.

He looked like mom before she died.

“Hey Rus...” I said awkwardly.

“Hey Uke...” He said, attempting a smile and trying to sit up before wincing and settling back down.

“Um try not to move.” I replied walking over quickly to the chair next to his bed.

“Are you okay? Are Bela and Kazi okay? Is dad alive?” He asked, his eyes filled with worry.

“We’re fine. Bela and Kazi are a little shaken up, but they’re not hurt, just tired.” I replied.

“Good... good...” He sighed with relief. “And dad?”

“Alive, unfortunately...” I huffed.

“Why are you so upset? He's our dad.” Russia frowned.

“He's a dick.” I snapped.

“He's still our dad. He.. cares... In his own way.”

“No he doesn't! Dad couldn't care less!” I yelled back.

I didn't mean to get angry at Russia like that, but at the same time I was just too pissed to care.

“That's not true. I don't don't know why you're so angry at him all the time. Is he abusive? Yeah. Is he rude and scary? Yes. But I have to believe he wants the best for us. We're his kids.” Russia retorted.

“Lies.”

“What?”

“Lies.” I repeated. “You weren't there. You don't know what happened.”

There was a pause.

“You mean the night you got back?” Russia asked softly. “In dad's office?”

I nodded.

“Ukraine? What happened to you?”

I looked down, I couldn't meet his eyes.

“Russia...”

I took a deep breath.

“Dad tried to kill me.”

A/n: Oh boy was this hard to write.

Hope y'all aren't too mad about that cliffhanger lmao.

Also Ukraines POV is super interesting to write from.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12

Russia's POV

"Russia..."

He took a deep breath.

"Dad tried to kill me."

"What." I said, in shock.

Dad... wouldn't.. He couldn't.. That was too far.

"You heard me Rus." He said, pulling his arms tight around his chest.

"Can you... explain?" I asked, trying to keep my tone calm.

He nodded slowly, but still wouldn't meet my eyes.

"The night I got back.. So did the hospital bills." Ukraine said slowly. "My treatments were really expensive and Dad didn't like that. He.. took me into his office and started drunkenly yelling at me- you know, the usual but it was so much worse that night."

I could feel a sinking pit in my stomach that refused to shrink, no matter how much I wanted it to.

"Dad told me I was a burden. A waste of space. A waste of time and money. H-he told me it would be better if I was dead. He...." Uke sucked in a deep breath, I could see his eyes filling up with tears. "He went into this fit of rage and just wouldn't stop screaming at me. He started punching me and beating me and he had me pinned against the wall I-I-I couldn't breath- couldn't move..."

Tears were now streaming down his face and he looked like he

was starting to have a panic attack or being stuck in some sick dream.

“H-he grabbed a knife Rus... and he brought it down. He brought it down on me.” Ukraine was starting to sob now, horrible, paralyzed sobs. “He was so drunk he missed. Barely. I still..”

He pulled up his sleeve to show me the jagged scar that ran across his upper arm.

It was easily hidden by a short sleeved shirt, very hard to notice. But I should have. I should have noticed.

“I managed to get away and hide, obviously. But yeah, Dad... tried to kill me.”

He looked so angry, so hateful, it was almost terrifying.

“Ukraine I-” I faltered. “Ukraine, Dad-”

He shook his head.

“Don't try and sit here, and *pretend* like dad cares about us.” Ukraine said, his voice shaking with cold rage. “Because I know for a *fact* he doesn't care about me.”

I looked down at my hands in my lap. I didn't know what to say. I didn't know what to think or how to feel.

“I... don't know what to say.” I said honestly.

“That's a first.” Ukraine replied, wiping the tears from his eyes. “You usually have some inspirational big brother thing to say.”

“Really?”

“Yeah. Im.. really glad you're awake. I don't know- um... nevermind.” He said, cutting himself off.

“So-” I started, but was interrupted by the arrival of one of the nurses.

“Hello you two, sorry to bother, but I'm going to need you-” The nurse pointed to Ukraine. “To come with me so we can run some tests and your brother can get some rest okay?”

Ukraine nodded and stood up.

“Tell Bela and Kazi I said ‘Hi’.” I said as he walked to the door.

“I will.”

The nurse stepped out and Ukraine was half way through the door when I called out.

“Hey Uke?”

“Yeah?” He said, pausing.

“I love you.”

There was a beat.

“Love you to Rus.” He replied, looking at me for a moment with an unreadable expression on his face before exiting the room.

I messed with the bandages on my arms while I waited for the doctor. My head hurt but my mind was going at a million miles per hour. Why would dad try to kill him? Why didn't I know sooner? Was I going to have burn marks as bad as Ukes? Why didn't I say I love you enough?

I paused on that last question.

I already knew the answer.

A few doctors came in and ran some tests on me. It seemed like I'd be alright medically speaking, but mentally speaking? I didn't feel so great.

I lay on my back on the hospital bed, just staring at the ceiling and listening to the beeps and buzzes of the machines around me.

It was so quiet but yet so loud at the same time.

I sighed, and carefully tried to roll onto my side with no avail. According to the doctor I'd broken a rib or two when the roof caved in, which I didn't even remember. I only remembered running into the house and waking up here.

As I shifted slowly onto my back again, a thick stack of papers tucked neatly into a blue folder on the side table caught my eye. I reached over, wincing, to grab them.

I sat myself up and slowly opened it, turning the pages.

My family's entire medical record.

Furiously, I skimmed through the pages until I found it.

Moms record.

I felt my breath hitch as I ran my fingers over my moms name at the top of the page.

Y/n, M/n, L/n.

A/n: Oh boy we got depression, more depression, and a little surprise at the end.

I originally wanted to Ukes POV again but it was just so mentally hard to write I just couldn't I got too sad.

Also, don't try to read this book while listening to the Interstellar soundtrack I tried to write to it but got too emotional and had to stop.

Chapter 13

Chapter 13

Y/n's POV

FLASHBACK

“Well well well... What do we have here?” I said, folding my arms.

The two young boys looked nervously at each other and backed up at, their arms full of candy and their faces guilty.

“It was his idea!” Russia and Ukraine said at the same time.

“You may have one piece each and put the rest back.” I smiled.
“Go on. Hurry up.”

Uke gave me a satisfied smile and Russia muttered a small ‘Thanks’ as they walked over to the pantry.

“Can we go outside when we’re done?” Rus asked, glancing over at me.

“So long as you take your sister.” I replied with a shrug, heading over to the fridge to start on dinner.

Belarus looked up excitedly from her coloring book in the other room.

“Aw man! Please mom? Do we have to take her? Why can't it just be me and Rus?” Uke groaned.

“Because she's your sister and I said so.” I replied, much to Ukraines disappointment. “You and Russia hang out all the time. Let your sister join in for once.”

“But Moooooomm- ow!”

Russia elbowed him in the ribs.

“Yes!” Bela giggled running into the kitchen upon hearing the conversation.

“Girls are the worst.” Uke muttered, as he begrudgingly took Bela’s hand and they headed towards the back door.

“You’re in charge outside okay? Make sure they don’t do something stupid.” I said to Russia, giving him a kiss on the cheek.

“Okay Mom.” He replied, a small smile on his face.

“Love you!” I called after him as he hurried off to the door.

“Love you too!” He yelled back.

“Kids.” I chuckled, turning my attention to dinner.

I hummed as I worked, swaying to an invisible beat as I moved methodically through the kitchen.

“Honey, I’m home.” I heard Russia’s voice call from the front of the house.

“In the kitchen love!” I called back, a grin spreading across my face as I heard him walk through the house and into the room.

I set down the knife I was holding and walked over to him, wrapping my arms around him.

“Welcome home...” I sighed happily looking up at him.

“Glad to see you.” He smiled faintly, brushing a stray hair behind my ear.

“How was work?”

“Long. Busy. Everything’s been worse with the war over.”

“The war ended years ago.”

“But the consequences haven’t.”

“Well it's all worked out hasn't it? You have a steady job, there's food on the table, a roof over our head, you and I survived and got married, we love each other very much and have four beautiful children. What more could you want?”

“You always manage to see the good in everything.” He kissed me gently.

I grinned and kissed him back.

“Speaking of the kids, where are they?” Soviet frowned, looking around.

“Rus, Uke, and Bela are outside in the back. And Kazi's upstairs taking a nap, apparently he had a bad day at school.”

“Speaking of school, I still think we should be shipping Russia off.”

“Soviet..” I frowned, pulling away. “I don't want him to go to military school.”

“Why not? We have the money saved, he's becoming a man, and I think he's ready.” Soviet replied.

“I can't let him get hurt again...” I said, looking out the window at my kids playing in the back, my eyes glued on Russia's prosthetic. “I-I can't...It was my fault last time... It won't be mine this time.”

“Y/n...” Soviet said softly, placing his hand under my chin and lifting my face up so I could look at him. “No one saw that plane coming. It was the war. Accidents happen. Don't blame yourself for it. He's... alive isn't he?”

“Yeah. You're right.” I gave him a fake smile. “I should finish dinner. You go upstairs and wake up Kazi.”

Soviet made a face.

“You should wake him up.”

“You'll never get better with them if you don't try.” I sighed.

“Please, just wake your son up. It’s not that hard.”

“I’d rather not. It’s a mother's responsibility.”

“Soviet-”

“Y/n!” He barked.

I flinched back away from him.

“I-I’ll be right back.” I said, quickly pushing past him and rushing up the stairs.

I stopped at the top of the steps and leaned against the wall, clutching my stomach. I shouldn't have rushed so fast, it hurt too much.

My fingers traced the spot on my face where a red slap mark had shone through a few months ago. Soviet had apologized many times, he didn't mean it. He’d lost his temper on me. But I’d rather me than the kids.

I took a few deep breaths to steady myself and headed down the hall to Kazakhstan's room.

“Kazi..” I said, softly, entering the room.

I sat on the edge of his bed and moved my hand past his golden downy wings and to his sleeping form.

“Kazi my sunshine, wake up.” I said, leaning forwards and kissing his cheek.

He giggled sleepily.

I smiled and kissed his cheeks again and again, running my hand to his stomach and tickling him.

“Mama! Mama stop!” He giggled as I began to tickle more and more.

“Are you awake now?” I laughed.

He nodded.

“Come on sunshine, time for dinner.”

“Carry me?” He looked up at me with pleading eyes.

“You’re getting much too old for me to carry you.” I remarked, but shifted so he could hop onto my back, piggy-back style.

He wrapped his arms tight around me and snuggled his head into the crook of my neck.

I smiled to myself, trying to ignore the rush of emotions and tears that threatened to show my true feelings.

I stepped off the last step and walked down into the kitchen.

“See? Wasn't so hard.” I said to Soviet, who was already setting dinner out. “And thank you for finishing.”

“Of course.” He said with a nod as I set Kazi down.

“Hello Papa.” Kazi said quietly.

“Hello Kazakhstan.” Soviet replied, somewhat awkwardly.

I inwardly sighed. He was never going to get good with the kids. I’d be stuck raising them on my own and- No. I couldn't. It was too stressful already.

I walked to the back door and stuck my head out.

“Russia! Belarus! Ukraine! Dinner!”

I opened the door to let them in and they took their seats at the table.

“Who's hungry?”

“I’m going to go grab something at the store.” I told Soveit as I put on my jacket and grabbed my keys.

“Okay. I’ll see you soon.” He said, pecking my cheek as I walked out the front door.

I took a deep breath and hopped in the car, running my hands over the steering wheel. I’d hopefully be able to get a new one before Russia needed to drive. I was sad I was going to miss it.

I pulled out of the driveway and turned up the radio all the way, trying to drown out all the thoughts in my head as I continued down the road.

My insides did not like the bumpiness of the old car. I could feel myself starting to puke and the taste of chemicals rose in my throat.

I pulled into the parking lot of the grocery store and got out, heading inside as quickly as I could. I quickly passed by aisle after aisle, until I found what I was looking for. The cleaning supplies.

I felt a flood of relief when I saw it. The window cleaner. I grabbed a bottle off the shelf, feeling at peace once again.

Clutching it to my chest, I walked over to check out and made my purchase. I raced out to the car and hit the gas, I had to make it home before he accidentally got too drunk again and took it out on the kids.

I swung into the drive and raced up the steps but stopped at the door. I opened it as quietly as I could and stepped inside. I was too late.

I could hear Soveit speaking in harsh Russian and Bela crying out in fear as a loud ‘*smack!*’ rang through the house.

“Love! Im home!” I yelled, trying to keep the fear out of my voice.

There was a moment of silence.

“I’m in here honey.” Came Soviets response.

I walked over slowly into the living room.

I could see fear in my children's eyes as I walked in the room.

“Well what are you all doing up this late?” I asked, pretending not to know what was going on. “It’s bed time now. Head upstairs. Go. Go.”

They all raced up the stairs at full speed, except for Russia, who paused for a moment and looked into my eyes, asking me silently if it was safe for me to be alone with him.

I gave him an encouraging smile and he nodded, finishing his ascent.

“What’d you need cleaner for?” Soviet slurred drunkenly. “I thought you bought some last week...”

“Well a house gets dirty you know.” I replied. “You look tired love. You should head to bed soon.”

“Mhm..” He nodded slowly. “You better come.”

“Of course love.” I kissed his cheek. “I’m just going to make some tea. I’ll be right up.”

He nodded again and headed up the stairs.

I watched him go, satisfied I was alone, I quickly began to make a cup of tea.

The cup steamed gently as I finished my brew. Now for the hard part.

I took a shaky breath as I twisted the top off the window cleaner and poured some into the small tea cup and began to drink. I drank as fast as I could, I could feel the chemicals burning down my throat as I drank faster and faster, trying to ignore the horrible taste.

I gasped for breath as I finished my cup and gripped the counter top to stead myself. My mouth and throat were writhing in pain, my eyes watered, my brain went foggy.

I slid myself onto the floor and sat there for a moment, breathing harshly and trying not to cry out from the pain. It wasn’t as bad as

drinking it straight, but it still hurt like the devil.

I pulled myself to my feet and threw my cup in the sink and put the cleaner away.

My feet felt like lead as I dragged myself up the stairs.

“Mom?”

My head whipped around as I saw Russia standing in the hall.

“Rus...” I breathed. “What’s going on? Can’t sleep?”

“Are you okay?”

“I’m fine Russia.”

He gave me a skeptical look.

“Really I’m fine. What do you need.”

I saw his face redden in the dim light.

“I... cant get it off again...” He said, embarrassed.

“Oh...”

I walked over to him as he sat on the ground, and gently helped him undo the straps and clams that held on his prosthetic.

“Sorry Mom...” He sighed. “It’s my fault for not being strong enough.”

“Don’t be love.” I said, kissing his forehead. “It’s not your fault.”

It’s mine.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” He said, looking at me with those adoring eyes, so full of worry and concern.

“I’m fine.” I reassured him over again. “Go to sleep. I’ll see you in the morning.”

I gave him one last hug, before helping him up before heading into

my room, where Soviet was passed out on the bed.

I climbed in next to him and turned out the lamp light on the nightstand next to me.

I felt tears start to form in my eyes as pain burned in my stomach.

I wished dying didn't hurt so much.

“Y/n?”

“S-oveit.... I-I’m fine....”

“Y/n!”

Pain.

“Mom what's going on?”

Blood.

“Is mom okay?”

Tears.

“Y/n!”

Agony.

“Mom!”

“Don't try and sit up Mrs. L/n. You’ve been asleep for days.”

My eyes fluttered open weakly, scanning the room for the source of the voice.

“Hey Switz....” I coughed weakly.

“You have a lot of explaining to do.” The red and white faced country frowned, crossing his arms.

“What do you mean?” I asked innocently.

“I got your test results back. Extremely large quantities of Isopropyl in your system. No one accidentally drinks that much window cleaner.” Switzerland said, tossing his chart on the bed and sitting down in the chair next to me. “Y/n... what the hell....”

“I couldn't do it anymore...” I said, trying not to cry as much as I felt like. “Switz... you have no idea what it's like.”

“You could have called the authorities.”

“He... loves me too much. He'd never let us go. We'd always be running. I can't do that to my kids...”

“Then why kill yourself y/n.... Do you know what a shock it'll be for them?” Switzerland replied, giving me a hard stare.

“Why do you think I did it this way? Getting ‘sick’? Slowly dying? If I really wanted to off myself that quickly I would have done it already. They can never know what I've done.”

“I can tell them.”

“You wont. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act says otherwise. You can't tell them anything.”

“I often forget you were a nurse.”

“Well I had to do my part didn't I?”

I suddenly coughed hard and felt burning in my throat as more blood came spilling out of my mouth. Switzerland rushed forward to catch it with a small bucket.

“T-Thanks...”

“Y/n...”

“I don't have much time left. I know that. I... I want to see them one more time. And then you turn off the machines and we'll be all done with it.”

“Okay... I’ll be right back.” He said with a heavy sigh.

“Thank you.” I whispered as he left.

I waited in the almost silence as my only company was the rhythmic but subtle decline of the beeping of the machines and the churning of my stomach.

“Here you are.” Switzerland said, herding them in.

“Ruski. Bela.” I smiled weakly, but quickly faltered as I looked around. “Where are Kazi and Uke?”

“Kazakhstan is too nervous to come in and Ukraine is down in pediatrics.” Switzerland informed me.

“W-what?” I said, struggling to sit up, ignoring the searing pains that burned through my intestines. “What’s wrong with Ukraine?”

“He was in an accident. He’ll be fine.” Switzerland assured me, gently pushing me back down.

“He must be so scared right now... I-I need to see him.” I protested.

“Y/- Mrs. L/n. You need to talk to your children.” He replied, giving me a look that said, you-brought-this-on-yourself-and-you-know-it.

“Come here darlings.” I said with as much vigor as I could.

Bela gently snuggled her way into my arms and I held her as tight as I could as she began to cry.

“Shhh... don’t cry Bela... don’t cry... I’ve got you.” I cooed, stroking her hair gently.

“Mommy I’m scared.” She sobbed harder. “D-don’t go.”

“I’m not going anywhere, I’m right here....”

I held on to her for a few more minutes, trying not to meet

Russia's eyes as he stood at the foot of my bed. I knew if I looked at him I'd be weak.

"Can you go wait outside for a moment Bela?" I said softly, pulling her away and brushing a stray hair from her face. "I'll be out soon, I just need to talk to Russia for a moment."

She nodded, sniffing as Switzerland led her out of the room.

"You're not going to be out are you." Russia said softly once the door had closed, walking over and sitting in the chair next to me.

"You're too smart for your own good." I sighed, reaching up and cupping his face in my hand.

"Mom..." He whispered, holding my hand, tears tracing down his cheeks.

"Russia don't cry, you're too big to cry. Please." I said, tears starting to spill down my own. "You're making me cry."

"Im sorry Mom."

"Don't be Russia.. Don't be..."

"Sorry Mom.." He whispered again.

"Russia, I need you to do something for me. Something important." I coughed. "I need you to be strong. You have to look after your siblings. You must promise you will care for them and protect them, no matter the cost."

"I-"

"Russia p-promise.." I coughed harder, the machines starting to beep louder.

"Promise."

Coughs came faster and faster, blood rushed harder and harder, beeps machines, nurses, yelling.

A nurse grabbed Russia and began to haul him away.

“Russia!” I called as I felt myself begin to slip, I could see him drifting farther and farther away.

“I promise Mom!” He yelled as I felt blackness began to take me over.

“I promise.”

A/n: I am sososossosos sorry for the lack of update!!

This book is not dead I swear, you'll have your story.

With that out of the way, I hope you're not too upset by this chapter, please remember if you are sensitive not to read or to skip over certain parts of chapters, I wouldn't want to upset anyone in any way.

Hope you have a good day/night and I love you all very much, thank you for 3k + reads!!

Chapter 14

Chapter 14

Russia's POV

“Mom.... killed herself.....?”

My fingers gripped the pages tightly as a few unwelcome tears threatened to spill.

I couldn't believe it. It was all a lie.

Mom had been getting a little weaker and a little sicker before she died, we thought she was sick. *I* thought she was sick.

I should have known better. I should have figured it out sooner.

But why did she do it?

She told us how much she loved us.

But did she not love us enough to stay?

Slowly closing the folder, I pulled my knees in close and held the papers tightly in my chest. I shut my eyes tight so I wouldn't begin to cry. I was the big brother, even alone, I was the big brother. It was my job not to cry.

Even though that's all I wanted to do.

Everything was on fire.

We were running.

But I saw the plane in the sky.

I wanted to reach up to touch it.

Standing.

Watching.

Waiting.

“Russia!”

It hit me.

I only felt searing pain.

“RUSSIA!”

Then nothing.

My eyes snapped open and I felt the phantom pain rising up where my leg should have been. I blinked, trying to fight back the blinding lights of the hospital room.

“Morning sleepyhead.” I heard Ukraine said tiredly to my left.

“Well someones up early.” I smirked teasingly as I sat up and looked over at him. “Normally I'd have to threaten to tell your boyfriend until you'd give in.”

“He is not my!” Ukraine blushed. “It doesn't matter, I'm too old and tired to deal with this.”

I chuckled as he sighed and leaned back in his chair and crossed his arms.

“Too old? You're fourteen Uke, calm down.” I said, rolling my eyes. “Anyways, are Bela and Kazi here? I haven't seen them yet.”

Ukraine nodded.

“Yeah they're out in the waiting room. But I wanted to make sure you were up first and we're doing okay. You look like you had a rough night.”

“What makes you say that?” I said, defensively.

“You were tossing and turning and muttering about planes in your sleep. We both know what you’re dreaming about. I wish you’d just open up to someone and get it over with.”

“What do you think you are? My therapist?” I retorted. “You worry about your own problems.”

There was a tense moment of silence between us.

“I’ll go grab Bela and Kazi.” Ukraine said shortly, quickly leaving the room.

“Uke!” I called halfheartedly, but he ignored me.

I sighed and rubbed my face with my hands, ignoring the scratchiness of the bandages wrapped around my arms.

“Ruski!”

Bela rushed to my side in excitement, throwing her arms around me and squeezing me in a tight hug.

“Hey there Bela-roo.” I grinned, wincing slightly from the hug. “Be a bit gentle?”

“Ruski....” Bela said, pulling away and looking long and hard into my eyes, her own feeling with tears. “I thought we were going to lose you.”

“No no Bela...” I said, pulling her back in. “I’m not going anywhere, I could never leave my best sister.”

She sniffed quietly as she clung to me and stroked her hair and whispered comforting words. I looked over at Uke and Kazi, who were standing quietly off to the side. I could tell Uke wanted out and Kazi looked like he wanted to say something to me.

“Hey Bela?” I piped up.

“Yes?” She replied.

“Want to go find me some breakfast? Nurses haven’t shown up yet,

maybe you could sneak me a treat?" I asked, taping the end of her nose.

"Yup!" She grinned, giggling softly.

Uke nodded at me and gave a look to Kazi I couldn't quite read.

"Come on Bela." Uke said, tilting his head towards the door as she followed him out.

"What's up Kazi?" I asked once the other two were out of the room, patting the bed.

Kazi nervously hopped up and sat in the spot where my right leg should have been.

"Kazi?" I asked again, after a few minutes of silence. "What's wrong? What's going on?"

"I..." He hesitated. "I was afraid I wouldn't get to say goodbye. Like with mom."

"Kaz...." I said gently. "That wasn't your-"

"I had the chance to go in and say goodbye." He sniffed, his wings starting to tremble. "I was too scared. I was afraid that, now, when I'm not scared, I wouldn't get the chance."

I felt my throat clench.

What the hell was I supposed to say?

"Mom knew you wanted to say goodbye. She knew you were scared but..." I felt like I was lying, how could I say anything good about mom now that I knew she'd killed herself. "Kazi I-"

"We're back!" Bela announced, walking back into my room with some food in her arms.

"Mmm that looks good." I said, giving her a nod of approval.

She gave me a grin and a nod.

“I even snuck you some Jello.” She whispered loudly.

“Thanks Bela.” I chuckled lightly. “Knew I could count on you.”

I finished up my food while Bela and the others talked about what I’d missed while I’d been asleep. Some stuff on the news channel, some stuff the hospital staff had told them, secret ways to get good hospital food.

As visiting hours came to an end, the hospital staff told them to leave.

I gave Bela another hug and a kiss as she walked out with Kazi and Uke, and neither one would even look at me.

As they walked out, I reached over to the stack of files and looked for moms.

It was missing.

“Looking for this?”

My head snapped up from the stack up papers to see Ukraine standing in the doorway holding up a tan folder with moms name on it.

There was a tense silence between us.

“Did you read it?” I asked coolly.

“I did.” He said, tossing it on the bed and sitting down at the edge of it.

“So you know.”

“Yup.”

Another pause.

“You can’t tell the Uke. You can’t.”

“Wasn’t planning on it. I’m not that stupid but....” He looked at

me for a moment. "I... I thought she cared...."

"She...." I breathed, I couldn't even get my thoughts to figure out what I wanted to say, hell I didn't even know how I felt.

"She didn't care either huh?" Uke sighed.

"No Uke, Mom was different." I replied. "Mom cared."

"Are you saying that because you believe it? Or because you're scared it's not true?"

I didn't respond.

"Uke?" I said, slowly.

"Yeah?" He replied, looking over at me with slight concern.

I swallowed hard, I could feel emotions pounding in my chest as a shakily opened my mouth.

"How am I...." I took a deep breath, I could feel Uke curiously waiting for what I had to say.

"How am I supposed to tell Bela and Kazi that their mom ever cared?"

A/n: I know this chapter is a little short and slow and I apologise.

I've been really busy in quarantine (weird, I know) and I've been trying to pull myself back into writing and into this book. This book has been one of the biggest and most exciting challenges I've ever had with my writing and I want to make sure it's done right which is why this chapter is a little filled so I can ease myself back into this book.

Hope you all have a great day/night and thank you so much for reading!!

Chapter 15

Chapter 15

Being in the hospital is boring.

I started to feel much better after some real food and rest, but the nurses didn't want to let me and my siblings go on the account that my dad was still here.

Dad came around a day after I did and the doctors said it was fine for my siblings to go see them but they wanted me to rest more. Bela was really concerned about Dad, and I knew Kazi was curious so I made Ukraine take them. Ukraine didn't go in though, he waited at the door, which was fair now that I knew the truth.

"So how is he?" I asked, as Ukraine leaned back in his chair.

"Fine I guess." Uke shrugged. "I mean... he's alive and breathing..."

"I see." I nodded, I knew Uke wouldn't tell me that much.

"I still don't know why you went back for him Rus. It would have been better for all of us if you let him die."

"Uke-"

"I'm being serious. I mean, no more beatings, no going hungry, we could finally get medical help from the system, I would have to worry about the next time dad gets drunk and tries to... you know..." He gave me a sideways glance.

"I hear what you're saying but...." I started.

"What? Because you would have felt bad letting our Dad die? He deserves it." Ukraine said angrily.

"I'm guessing you though Mom deserved to die too for leaving us

huh." I said coldly.

Ukraine didn't reply.

"I'm sick and tired of having this conversation." I sighed. "I'm so done with you getting mad at me for saving Dad. I had my reasons."

"Fine." Ukraine said, standing up and glaring down at me. "Just know that next time one gets hurt, it's your fault."

He stormed out of the room and slammed the door behind him.

I leaned back in the bed and rubbed the sides of my head.

I did the right thing saving Dad, no matter what Ukraine said, we'd be fine.

But a part of my brain wondered if what Ukraine was saying was true. What if Dad really hurt them? I was the reason he was alive. I'd he killed Uke it'd be all my fault.

"No." I fought back. "I promised mom we'd stay together. And I'd protect them. We're a family, it's my job to keep us together."

I pulled the blanket over my head and took in a few breaths. I pulled my leg up to my chest and touched the edge of what was left of my other leg. A constant reminder.

I was just glad it didn't hurt for once. The nurses had given me meds for the pains once I'd explained the situation, it felt nice to not have it crammed into the old prosthetic.

I curled up even tighter and tried not to think about Dad, or Uke, or what would happen after we left the hospital or anything.

A few minutes later, sleep over took me and I drifted off into the dark.

My eyes fluttered open gently as I felt someone nudging me as they tried to get up onto the bed.

“Bela!” I heard Ukraine hiss. “He's sleeping!”

I sighed and sat up slowly.

“Don't worry about it, I'm up.” I said, putting on a sleepy smile for Bela and Kazi.

“Ruski!” Bela beamed, snuggling into my arms. “I'm so happy you're awake.”

“I'm happy to be up and see you too.” I replied, pulling her close and kissing the top of her head.

I held Bela for a few more minutes while she babbled on about how things were going at Aunt Czechoslovakia's house. I was grateful for my Aunt allowing them to stay, I owed her big time. Hopefully, I'd have the chance to make it up to her one day.

“There's someone coming to see you later.” Ukraine interrupted.

“Oh?” I said, looking up. “Who?”

“You'll have to see.” He replied. “And it's going to be a quick visit today, Aunt Czechoslovakia has some errands to run and she won't be able to pick us up later.”

“I see...” I said, trying not to feel disappointed. “Guess we'll just have to make the most of it.”

I let Bela ramble on a bit longer and exchanged a few informational words with Ukraine, trying not to think about yesterday. I was just about to ask Kazi how he was doing when my Aunt and cousins walked in.

“Hey guys.” Czech waved as they headed in.

“Hey Cezch, Slovakia, Aunt Czechoslovakia.” I greeted.

“Hello Russia.” My Aunt smiled. “Feeling better?”

“Much better.” I nodded. “They'll probably let me out as soon as.. You know...”

Aunt Czechoslovakia gave me a knowing look which led to a slightly awkward silence between all of us.

“So...” I said, quickly noting Czech and Slovakia's hockey uniforms. “Big game coming up?”

“Huh?” Czech asked, confused, before realizing. “Oh yeah! We have the championships coming up. Our coach has definitely upped the practice times.”

“We barely have time to sleep or do homework.” Slovakia chimed in.

“Whatever, hockey's fun.” Czech shrugged. “Who needs sleep anyways.”

“You both do...” I heard my Aunt mutter.

“Hey Canada's on the hockey team right?” I asked, glancing over at Ukraine, who went red faced immediately after hearing his name.

“Yup. Sure is.” Czech nodded. “Hes... *decent*...”

“Oh come on, he's just good as you are if not better.” Slovakia said, rolling his eyes.

“Kia! Take that back!” Czech whined.

“Boys. Stop.” Aunt Czechoslovakia sighed.

“Sorry mom...” The both mumbled.

“Anyways, we should be off. I'll be sure to drop them off tomorrow.” She said to me.

“Thanks Aunt Czecho.” I replied.

Bela gave me one last squeeze before slipping off my lap and walking over to my Aunt and taking her hand. I said goodbye to Kazi and stopped Uke at the door.

“Are you going to tell me who's coming now or not?” I asked.

Uke smirked.

"You'll see." He replied, walking out and shutting the door.

"That little..." I muttered, shaking my head.

I sat against the propped up pillows, now wishing I had my phone. But like pretty much everything else, it'd gone up in flames. I tried not to think about all of mom's stuff that had gone in the fire too. All the memories I'd forget as time passed.

My mind only had three things spinning around it; my mom and dad, my siblings, and the fire. I guess that was four actually.

I waited in the hospital for hours for whoever this mystery guest was. I watched TV and flipped through the same magazines over and over again. I was about to just roll over and try to get some sleep when I heard a familiar tapping of a cane down the hall.

"America.."

I perked up, sitting forwards, and trying to look for him out the small window on the wall that looked out into the hall.

The handle went down on the door and my favorite red, white, and blue face peeked in the door.

"Russia?" He asked, waiting for a response.

I held my breath, choosing to wait.

A few more seconds of silence ensued as Ame tried to listen for me, but I'd been playing this game for years. Just as America began to pull back into the hallway I cupped my hands around my mouth.

"BOO!" I yelled, America let out a loud scream and stumbled backwards.

"RUSSIA!!" He yelled back angrily, waving back a nurse or two that had shown up to see what all the fuss was about.

He quickly shuffled his way into the room and flopped himself

onto the bed, grabbing onto me.

“Russia I'm going to kill you this time I really am. Russia you dirty basta-”

I grabbed him by the collar of his shirt and kissed him.

He struggled for a moment before giving in and kissing me back. I pulled him closer and closer until he was in my lap and my hands encased his head, my fingers running through his fluffy hair.

“Mmm I'm so mad at you.” He sighed as I continued to kiss him between words.

“You're cute when you're mad.” I smirked playfully, even though he couldn't see it.

“Next time I come, I'll bring one of New Zealand's swords and run you through the skull with it.” He replied.

“You wouldn't know where to aim.”

“You're so tall it wouldn't matter if I missed.”

I smiled and kissed him again. After a while, he stopped threatening me and settled down a bit, mindlessly playing with my hair.

“You had me worried, you know.” He said quietly. “Everyone was saying you died.”

“I'm not surprised. I would have thought I died too.”

“Russia!” He chided, slapping me.

“Ow! Kinda in the hospital remember?”

“Shut up.” He said with a surprising amount of harshness in his voice, sitting up out of my arms.

“America?” I said questioningly, realizing he was being serious.

“I thought you died in Russia.” He said slowly.”

He took a deep breath.

“And then you didn't wake up. My mom got a call from one of the doctors she's friends with there, they didn't think you were going to make it. Russia I-” His voice broke.

“Russia I love you.”

Those words hit me like a brick to the face. He'd said “I love you” a few times since we'd started dating, but never like this. He was being one hundred percent completely serious. Him. America. Who was known for joking and being happy and putting up an attitude. America, who always put up a front and never showed how he was feeling.

“America I love you too.” I replied, gently taking his arm and pulling him to face me. “I feel the exact same way.”

He didn't reply, he just grabbed my arms and buried his face in my chest.

“Please don't leave me again Russia.” He said, I could feel a tear or two fall down my arms. “I don't want to be alone in the dark.”

“You're never getting rid of me Stripes.” I said, kissing the top of his forehead.

“Shut up Commie.” He chuckled, pushing the tears away with his free hand.

I stroked his hair some more, whispering words of soft comfort and a few bad jokes to make him laugh.

It was a beautiful moment.

One I wished would never end.

A/n: Awe what a cute ending. Which usually means I'm going to destroy you all in the next chapter.

I'm so sorry I've been absent!! My mental health just destroyed me last month and I got really unmotivated to write. I'm feeling a lot better now and will try to post more often. Sorry

again for the hiatus.

**Thank you all so much for reading and have a great day/
night!!**

Chapter 16

Chapter 16

“Are you ready to see your father now?”

I nodded to the nurse next to me as she led me down the hall, my crutches clinking on the polished floor.

My stomach twisted and churned at the thought of seeing him again. What would he say to me? Would he be angry? What was I going to say?

The nurse opened the door for me and I stepped inside.

“Just call if you need anything.” She said kindly.

I muttered a quick thank you as she shut the door and I turned to face him.

“Hello Father.”

“Russia.” He replied.

There was a moment of silence.

“How are you feeling?” I asked. “The doctors said you were doing better.”

He just looked at me, he glared slightly, and my heart beat quickly in my chest.

“Sit.” He demanded, pointing to the chair next to him.

I swallowed hard and slowly made my way over to the chair.

“Hurry up.” He barked and I quickly slid into the seat and leaned my crutches against the wall.

I looked down at the floor, not daring to meet eyes- er well- eye.

He wasn't wearing his eyepatch, being in the hospital and all so you could see the gaping hole that was once his right eye. It made my insides squirm to look at.

"Look at me." He demanded and I forced my eyes to meet his.

"Yes father?" I asked quietly.

"Give me a moment I'm deciding." He scowled.

"Sorry." I whispered.

There was a tense moment while my father pondered whatever he was deciding.

"You saved my life." He said after a few minutes. "I owe you one."

"It's okay dad, you don't owe me anything." I replied.

Maybe I could use this to help my siblings somehow. Maybe lessen the beatings that would ensue the moment we got home. Once we found a home that is.

"Silence." He said harshly. "You dare to refuse me?"

"No father." I said quickly. "Thank you."

"Good... good..." He muttered, closing his eye and leaning back in the hospital bed. "Once we get out of here, you and I will have a lot of work to do if we are to survive."

"What do you mean?" I asked cautiously.

"Our house is gone and the hospital bills will be through the roof. We have some money in storage, but it won't be enough.... Won't be enough..." His voice began to trail off and his eye fluttered open and closed and the beeps on the heart monitor slowed.

"Dad?" I asked, reaching out to shake him.

"He's just a sleep." A voice said, startling me.

I turned to see a man, no- country- standing in the doorway.

He wore a white doctor's coat and a stethoscope was draped around his neck. It wasn't the doctors uniform that threw me though, it was his flag.

Bright red, with a white cross in the middle.

I'd seen that flag before.

But where?

"Im his doctor." The country said. "Hes resting now, it's time for you to leave."

I nodded and grabbed my crutches off the wall, balancing on my leg and making my way over to the doctor.

I gave my dad one last look, even in sleep he didn't look peaceful.

I looked over at the doctor, only to see him staring at my father, a look of pure hatred on his face. It caught me off guard, I'd never seen someone outside my family look at my dad with so much rage and pain.

"Um... sir?" I asked, tapping his arm.

"Right this way." He said, briskly turning around and leading me back to my room.

"Have you seen him yet?" Ukraine asked as he sat down next to me.

"Not yet..." I lied, I couldn't get over our visit.

The way he looked at me, the way he talked, it just gave me a feeling I couldn't shake, and I didn't need to stress anyone else out with it.

"Good." He said. "He'd probably just try to mess you up or something. Do we atleast know when you're getting out of here?"

“They’ll send me home when Dad’s better.” I said. “I just hope it's soon. I miss you guys.”

“Bela and Kazi miss you too.” Uke replied, I made note of him leaving himself out of the equation. “And it feels like staying we’ve been at Aunt Czechoslovakias for so long.”

“I bet.” I nodded.

“Sorry to interrupt.” The red and whit faced doctor said from the door. “But I'm here to tell you that you and your father are being released tomorrow.”

I glanced over and Uke and then back at the doctor.

“Thanks.” I said.

He paused a moment, looking the two of us over, and then swiftly leaving the room.

“Does he seem familiar to you?” I asked.

“Maybe? Who knows, I've seen enough doctors to last a lifetime. They’re all the same to me.” Uke shrugged. “Maybe that beam hit you on the head harder than you realized.”

“Yeah... maybe...”

Today was the day, I was finally getting out of this place.

I was told to meet my dad at the front in a few minutes, he’d gotten a car and we we’re going to pick up my siblings on the way to the hotel we were going to stay at until we found a place to live.

Bela had asked if we could live at our Aunts, I just said no, not wanting to explain that our Aunt would run him a thousand times over with one of her antique planes and drop him from the sky if he even came near her property.

I finished putting on my street clothes and groaned with pain as I slipped my leg into my prosthetic. I hadn't had to wear it in over a

week and putting it back on made it feel a million times worse. I put my hand over my mouth to stop myself from throwing up from the pain.

Shaking, I got to my feet and hobbled down the hall and out to the entrance, I saw my dad's car pull up to the side and I hopped in the front seat and put on my seatbelt.

We drove in silence the whole way to my Aunts house. I couldn't wait to see my brothers and sisters a lot more, but I was also terrified because of my dad.

He seemed so distracted, always having to pull the wheel back to get us in the middle of the road, muttering to himself and looking like he was going to pass out.

I breathed a small sigh when we pulled up to my Aunts house.

“Hurry up and get your siblings.” He said roughly, tapping his fingers impatiently against the old leather steering wheel.

I quickly hopped out and hurried the best I could to the front door. I rang the doorbell and waited.

“Ruski!” Bela exclaimed, opening the door and jumping into my arms.

“Hey there Bela-roo.” I grinned, hugging her back.

“I missed you.” She said letting go but still holding my hand.

“It's only been two days.” I remembered gently.

“I still missed you...”

“I missed you too Bela. Where are the boys?”

“Here.” Ukraine said, ushering Kazi out of the house, Aunt Czechoslovakia following behind them. “We’re packed and ready to go.”

I noted the single suitcase he was holding. We didn't have much

left.

“You guys get in the car okay? I'll be right there.” I said, giving Belas hand a squeeze and handing her off to Uke.

“Yes Russia?” My Aunt asked, figuring I wanted to talk to her.

“Thanks so much for everything Aunt Czecho.” I said. “I don't know how I can ever pay you back.”

“Just keep them safe.” She said, pulling me into a hug. “You know I'd take them in if I could in a heartbeat. But I promised your mother..”

“I know.” I sighed, pulling away.

“Give me a call when you're all settled okay? And if anything happens you're always welcome here.” She smiled.

“Thanks again.” I nodded, turning around and heading back for the car.

Like the drive to my Aunts, the drive to the hotel was also done in complete silence, minus my dad's swearing at the road.

We pulled up to the entrance and my father handed me a key card.

“Room 741.” He said, unlocking the doors. “I have some errands to run. I'll be back in the morning.”

He hustled us out of the car and took off like a shot.

“Wow. Leaving four children unattended at a hotel. Father of the year.” Ukraine said sarcastically.

“He'll be back.” I insisted, slipping the keycard in my pocket and taking Bela and Kazis hands. “Let's just get inside and settle in. Maybe this won't be so bad.”

“Your fake optimism never fails to inspire.” Ukraine said, rolling his eyes.

And we stepped into the hotel.

A/n: Oh boy plot progression.

I don't have much to say for this chapter, I think it speaks for its self.

I'll definitely try to upload atleast once more this month because we don't have much left of this story and I know you guys are waiting patiently to see how this all ends.

Much love and have a good day/night!

Chapter 17

Chapter 17

Im 16 years old, but I don't look 16.

People usually tell me I look older, usually 17 or 18 or sometimes even 20.

But I definitely did *not* look old enough to take care of three young children in a hotel by myself.

I kept my head down as I ignored the concerned and sometimes dirty looks from the adults and parents in the lobby. If these were kids from school, I'd probably yell and scowl to scare them off, but with adults I had to be careful. I'd gotten the cops called on me one to many times for looking "shady" or "suspicious".

"I want to push the button!" Bela squealed with excitement, running up to the elevator doors and smacking the button.

"Bela slow down." Ukraine hissed as we quickly followed after.

We walked in through the doors and I pushed the button to our floor, seven stories high.

"Which room is ours again?" Uke asked as we stepped out. "I wasn't paying attention."

"That one." I said, pointing a few doors down.

I walked up and swiped the key, letting my siblings inside to get settled.

Everyone got showered and cleaned up and I put Bela and Kazi in one bed and Uke in the other. He had trouble sleeping with people because of his germophobia, and the one occasion where I'd gotten food poisoning as a kid and threw up all over him.

I grunted and pulled out the bed on the pull-out couch for me to sleep in. My back would hurt like hell in the morning, but so long as my siblings got a good night's sleep I didn't care.

"Everyone settled?" I asked, walking into the main area of the room.

"Yup." Ukraine said, mindlessly flipping through the channels on the TV.

Kazi gave me a small smile.

"Russia I'm hungry." Bela said softly, putting a hand over her stomach.

"When was the last time you ate?" I asked, sitting on the edge of the bed.

"I had breakfast." She replied. "I was too excited to see you so I didn't eat lunch...."

"Oh Bela." I sighed.

"I'm sorry." She said, her eyes filling with tears.

"No Bela I'm not mad." I said quickly, shaking my head and tucking the covers around her a little tighter. "But I can't get food until morning, so just go to sleep and you won't be hungry anymore okay?"

Bela nodded, still upset, but wrapped the covers around her and curled up.

Kazi's stomach rumbled loudly and I watched him quickly put his hands over his stomach as if it would cover the sound.

"Im fine." He said quickly.

"Okay Kazi." I nodded, not wanting to press. "You get some sleep too okay?"

Kazi nodded and shifted, trying to get comfortable with the massive pair of golden wings he carried on his back.

“Turn it off and go to bed.” I said to Uke, gesturing to the TV.

He rolled his eyes and stuck out his tongue in protest but did what I asked.

“Now get some sle-” I was cut off by the sound of the door opening.

My father walked in, holding a stack of papers in one hand and a bottle of vodka in the other.

“Hello father.” I said as he sauntered into the room.

He tossed the papers onto a nearby table and looked around the room at all of us.

Bela pulled the sheets up to her face, trying to hide from him.

My father noticed this and glared.

“What are you hiding from you pussy?” He growled, marching up to her and grabbing her by the collar of her nightgown and lifting her out of the bed.

“Hey!” I yelled, without even thinking I shoved into him.

He dropped Bela and turned to me, lifting the half empty bottle and smacking it across my face. I could feel the familiar sharp sting of glass as the bottle broke against my skin.

I stumbled backwards as the liquid dribbled down my face and clothes. My father took a step towards me and I raised my arms to protect my head.

He kicked my prosthetic leg, hard, and slapped the side of my bloody face.

“Don't try that again.” He hissed, I could smell the alcohol strongly on his breath as he leaned towards my face. “I'm going out for a drink.”

Just like that, he was gone.

I fell back onto Ukraines bed.

It took all my willpower not to break down and start screaming and crying like a baby.

My leg was on fire, burning, coursing, wet heat streaming down what was left of my right leg.

“Russia holy- Kazi pull it off, now.” I heard Ukraine say and I winced as the fake leg was removed.

I looked down to see the blood pooling in the socket and running down the stump. The knobs and straps had scraped into my leg when my father had kicked it.

Everything was blurry for the next hour, I could feel clothes and towels being pressed to my face and leg, hear Bela sobbing, and my mutterings of “Im fine” and “just go to bed” but they didn't listen.

Eventually, the pain won.

I woke up a few hours later.

It was still night and dad isn't back yet.

I let out a quiet groan as I sat up and looked around the room. My siblings slept peacefully and the soft hum of the AC droned in the room.

The stack of papers on the coffee table caught my eye. I gently slipped off the pull-out couch and onto the floor.

Wincing, I managed to scoot over to the table and grab the papers. I frowned, just newspapers.

I frowned and went to put it back when a piece of paper slipped from the news. Curiously, I opened the folded papers and grabbed the small stack of papers tucked within.

My face paled as I realized what they were, adoption papers. More specifically, putting *up* for adoption papers.

I quickly scanned the adoption papers for the names.

Kazi.

Bela.

Uke.

All of my siblings' names were on the paper.

Except for mine.

A/n: Hi yes I'm alive and back with another short chapter.

Interesting ending am I right?

We're almost at the climax and y'all are in for a wild ride.

Speaking of wild ride, that pretty much describes my entire summer. I'll do my best to upload atleast twice a month or more if I can fit it into my crazy schedule.

Thank you guys for reading and your love, and have a great day/night!

Chapter 18

Chapter 18

A cool, calm, breeze of wind drifted through the trees below the hill. Kazi and Uke ran around, trying to get the brand new kite to fly into the clouds but with only some success.

Bela sat next to me and my mother, happily munching away on some snacks my mother had brought for our little picnic.

As for me, I leaned against my mother's side, her arm wrapped around me and my head on her shoulder.

I stretched out both of my feet and wiggled my toes in the soft grass. I heard Kazi and Uke shout excitedly as the small yellow and red kite whizzed its way into the sky.

As the kite floated above me, the air suddenly changed. The sky began to bleed out more red.

The bombs.

I lifted up my hands to shield my face as the plane came crashing down. Part of me wanted to scream but my lips were frozen shut. I squeezed my eyes shut as I braced for impact, but it never came.

“Russia...” Came a weakened whisper.

I blinked and saw my mother holding tightly to my hand, machines beeping and plain colored walls seemed to close in around us.

“You promised...” She choked, tears streaming down. “You said you’d take care of them, y-you promised me...”

“Mom-”

Her nails dug tightly into my hands and she looked desperately into my eyes, blood beginning to pool out of her mouth.

“YOU PROMISED!” She screamed and I felt my bones snapping under her tight grip, her lifeless eyes boring into my skull.

“Help!” I yelled, tears filling my eyes as I struggled to get away out of desperation and fear. “Mom stop! Someone help! Please! Mom! Im sorry! Help!”

My eyes snapped open and my hand instinctively went under the pillow as someone shook me to consciousness.

I whipped around just as my fingers clasped the hilt of the small knife.

“Okay! Jeeze!” Uke said, putting his hands up in defense. “It was just a nightmare! Next time I’ll just let you suffer through it.”

He got off the bed and threw a pillow at my face.

I just groaned and pushed it over to the side.

I lay there for a few more moments, my hands playing with the hilt of the small pocket knife. I’d managed to sneak it from Ukraine, finding it in his bag a few nights before. I wasn’t surprised to find out he had a knife after all the stuff dad had done to him.

Uke didn’t know I had it though, and I had seen him checking his bag, looking for the “lost” pocket knife. I wasn’t going to tell him I had it either.

I sat up in the bed, quietly slipping the knife into my pocket, and rubbing my eyes. Looking over, Kazi and Bela were asleep. Atleast, pretending to be. I knew Kazi wasn’t sleeping much, but I reminded them that sleeping would make the hunger go away.

Bela had complained to me after two days without eating that her stomach hurt and she was starving. I could only hold her and try to assure her that we would get food soon, she just had to be brave. I remembered how my heart clenched as she sobbed quietly into my shirt, her arms holding tight as if I was the only thing from stopping the hunger from clawing away her stomach.

Dad had been here once since he’d beaten me on our first night at

the hotel. He'd dropped off a little cash and then said he needed to "make sure a deal went through". Ukraine asked me what he had meant. I told him I didn't know.

But I did.

It had been a week at the hotel now and still no sign of Dad.

And no more money for food either.

Which meant we had to be hungry, again.

I winced slightly as I cleaned my wounds with warm soapy water. The cuts were healing okay, but the large gash on my sump from where my dad had kicked my prosthetic in was looking pretty bad. Without antibiotics, it was likely to get infected, or worse. I really didn't want to lose any more of what was left of my leg.

"Russia what are you doing?"

I gripped the edge of the tub to keep myself from falling in.

"Don't scare me like that." I said, slightly annoyed. "And what do you mean 'what are you doing'?"

"I'm pretty sure you took my knife." He said, sitting on the edge of the tub with me, but putting his legs facing out of the tub. "And you're being awfully quiet."

"So? Maybe I'm just a little tired." I retorted.

"I don't believe you." Ukraine said slowly.

There was a strained silence between us.

"He's up to something isn't he?" Ukraine whispered. "Isn't he?"

"It's nothing." I replied quickly.

"Give me my knife back."

"No."

“Russia you don't understand! I don't think we'll have another chance!” Ukraine said, a hint of fear in his voice.

“Another chance at what?” I said, my eyes narrowing slightly.

Ukraine looked at me, with an expression I couldn't quite read.

“At killing dad.”

A/n: Ohhhhhh that's interesting.

So sorry for the long wait!! School has been a nightmare so far and I havnt had time to breathe, much less write.

Sorry for the short chapter, it was originally supposed to be one very long chapter but I figured I'd split it up so I could post sooner.

Thank y'all so much for sticking around through the hiatus and I'm glad to be back.

Have a great day/night!

Chapter 19

Chapter 19

A thick silence falls between us.

Part of me knows he's right, we can't stay with him. Hes a monster and will tear my family apart but... murder...??

“Dad didn't hesitate with me.” Uke scowled, as if reading my thoughts. “Im not going to hesitate with him.”

I managed to get out of the tub and leaned against the wall, Uke got out and faced me.

“Uke listen, you're only 14-”

“And you're only 16! That's barely older than me! Don't try to play the big brother card with me right now. It's not going to work.”

“It's my job to protect you, I *am* your older brother. Listen, Uke, I promised mom-”

“WELL MOMS GONE!”

I slowly sucked in a harsh breath, I felt my fists ball up in anger.

“She's gone Russia, whatever you promised her, it doesn't matter now. We have to move on, find our own path. And that starts,” He took a step towards me. “With getting rid of Dad. Now hand me the knife.”

“No.” I said, my voice steely calm, I could feel the weight of the weapon grow heavy in my pocket.

I slowly slipped my hand in and squeezed it tight. Uke saw.

“Hand it over!” He yelled.

“I said no!”

Uke lunged at me, knocking me against the bathroom door. I wasn't strong enough to hold my own weight and came crashing down, Ukraine on top of me.

“Get off!” I yelled, trying to push him off as he tried to get his hands into my pants pocket.

“No! I can't live like this! I can't live with him!” He did his best to hold my hands off but he was physically weakened from years of sickness.

“Ukraine stops!”

I pulled the knife out to try and get him off but the world seemed to move in slow motion.

As I pulled it out and slowly lifted it to go above my head, Ukraine reached out for it, desperation in his eyes. As his hand inched closer, the poorly made knife blade flicked out, slicing into his tender flesh.

He screamed and pulled his hand back, clutching it to his chest.

I watched him writhe around him in horror, terrified by what I'd just done. I stumbled off the ground and leapt to my feet, I took a step towards him, still half paralyzed by fear.

“D-don't hurt me!” Uke cried out, looking up at me with eyes full of fear.
He looked at me like he looked at Dad.

I threw open the door and took off.

I ran.

I ran through the room, I ran down the stairs, I ran out the hotel doors and just kept running.

I finally stopped when my leg gave out, I heard a satisfying click! as it snapped from under me and my face met the concrete sidewalk.

There was no effort to get up.

There was no repairing the damage I'd just done.

As I squeezed my eyes shut to stop threatening tears, I could see Ukraines face.

Pale.

Shocked.

Scared.

Scared of *me*.

I was a monster.

No, worse than that.

I was just like my father.

I don't know how I managed to get back to the hotel room.

I had to throw my prosthetic in the trash on the way back.

Not even duct tape could save it now.

For some reason, it hurt to see it sitting there in the trash. I didn't know why. At this point it was basically a piece of crap and I hated it, but it was the only thing that had stayed constant in my miserable life. The missed holidays, the hours tending to my wounds, every night I'd managed not to cry, the afternoons, all the days at school, every date with Ame....

And now I had nothing left.

Nothing left to lose.

"Bela get down from there." I sighed leaning against the wall, startling my little sister.

She jumped slightly from her perch on the window cell.

“Sorry Ruski, I was just looking outside.” She said sheepishly as she hopped down. “What happened?”

She frowned, looking over at my bloody scrapes and lack of a right leg.

“I fell.” I replied. “Where's Ukraine?”

“There.” Kazi said, sitting straight up in one of the beds, pointing to the bathroom door.

He looked at me with reproach, as if he wasn't sure if he trusted me anymore.

I swallowed hard and nodded. Shooting me would have hurt less.

“He said he fell too.” Bela offered. “You should go cheer him up.”

“Y-yeah...” I slowly made my over and lifted my hand to knock softly but stopped.

I could hear my dad's car pull up from seven stories down through the open window.

He was here.

“Bela, Kazi, get over here now.” I said, trying to keep my voice from rising in panic.

“Ruski what's- ah!”

I threw the door open and shoved them inside with a startled Ukraine.

Quickly, I pushed the nearby table in front of the door, I could hear them banging in confusion from the door. I fell back, landing against one of the stiff beds, I pulled myself up, using it as a crutch.

Then I heard it.

My hand slipped into my pocket.

And the door opened.

“Russia.” My father said coolly, as his large frame entered the room. “What is the meaning of this?”

My siblings' cries stifled as my father spoke.

“I-Im not going to let you take them. You won't take my family from me.” I hated how my voice shook as the words left my mouth.

“Then you are a fool.” He glowered, coming closer. “I was prepared to offer you sanctuary with me. But it seems you have chosen suffering with them.”

Before I could blink he rushed forward and grabbed me by the neck, lifting me up and shoving me against a mirror on the far side of the room.

My mouth opened and closed, crying out for air, but my father's grip was too strong.

The blood, the glass, none of it mattered compared to the need for breath. I kicked, struggled, my vision going cloudy, I tried to scream, but nothing came out.

The bathroom door had finally managed to get shoved open by my siblings and they tumbled out onto the floor.

My eyes met Ukraines.

I had to make this right.

In one last surge of adrenaline, my hand shot out from my pocket, the knife blazing, and shoved it with every last fiber of strength in my body into the cold empty socket.

I fell to the floor, gasping for air as my father let out a strangled cry. He stumbled blindly through the room, smashing against the furniture and the walls in his rage.

I saw a flash of blue and yellow smash into the side of my father.

He tripped on his long coat and fell.

Fell down.

To the ground.

Through the open window.

A rush of gold and blue whizzed past me.

“Kazi no!” I screamed.

But he had already jumped out the window.

A/n: Ahhhh cliffhangers!!

My favorite hahaha.

I'm super excited, and sad, that we're almost at the end. Only 2, maybe 3, chapters to go. I havnt decided.

I feel like I say this in every authors note but sorry again about the delays.

Thank you sosososo much if you've stayed this far, you're amazing and I appreciate it.

Have a good day/night!!

Chapter 20

Chapter 20

A/n: Major Trigger Warning

I screamed my brother's name over and over again as I raced to the window.

He was diving down, trying to grab my father as he fell, but he didn't make it in time.

Kazi managed to grab his hand just as he hit the ground with a horrible *crunch*.

I didn't realize I was half way out the window until Ukraine pulled me back.

“Stairs.” He said firmly, pulling me back into the room.

I nodded, still in a daze as he pulled me to lean against him so I could use him as a crutch.

We hurried down the back stairs as fast as we could, Bela close behind. As soon as we were out the back door, I could see my father laying in a pool of blood, a terrified Kazakhstan by his side.

“Dad!” I gasped, pulling away from Uke and falling down by my father's side, cradling his bleeding head in my arm. “No... no no no no no no no.....”

His eyes fluttered open weakly, barely able to concentrate on my face.

“Russia...” He said weakly.

“Shh Dad no, you have to save your strength-” I looked around frantically. “Someone call an ambulance!”

He grabbed my wrist, clamping down on it with surprising strength.

“There's no time.” He said urgently.

“What? No, Dad no...” I felt my eyes fill with tears, a few moments ago, I was prepared to kill this man. But now I couldn't bear to watch another parent die before my eyes. “Dad why.... Why did you have to do all this...?”

I looked at him, begging him to tell me, yearning for some sort of answers in his last moments of clarity.

“Your mother... she was everything to me....” He said softly, almost with a tenderness in his voice. “You took her away from me...”

“You were abusing us!” I shouted in anger. “Mom killed herself because of you! You were drunk and you hated us!”

“She wanted kids... I didn't....” He seethed. “I wanted her to be happy.”

“Y-you're sick....” I was beginning to shake.

“She was... so depressed after your accident. You were stupid to get hurt. You hurt her...”

“I WAS HIT BY A PLANE!! AT NINE YEARS OLD!!”

He grabbed me by the throat, threatening to choke me.

I could see Uke step forwards but I stopped him with a look and turned my attention back to my father.

“Do it...Do it you bastard...” I said, my voice dripping with anger and pain. “Kill me just like you killed mom.”

He squeezed for a moment before letting go as he coughed, blood sputtering from his mouth.

“She would be alive... if it wasn't his fault.” He glared at Ukraine.

“What are you talking about?” Uke growled, but he looked scared.

“If it weren't... If it weren't for your Chernobyl incident.. We could have had more money to save her. You're a selfish, no good, spoiled brat. You should have died you piece of shit.” He spat, more blood dribbling down his mouth.

“Don't talk to my brother like that!” I shook him violently. “Don't you dare!”

He coughed harder, his eye fluttering, and his body starting to convulse.

“N-nothing you do matters.” He slurred, the life fading out of him. “I'll see her again, and then we can finally be happy, without you.”

“You're going to hell for what you've done.”

“Maybe so, but I'm taking you with me.”

Before I could react, a gun came flying out of his pocket, heading straight for my face.

I squeezed my eyes shut as the trigger was pulled, the shot fired.

I opened my eyes slowly, amazed I wasn't dead.

Ukraine was standing over him, one hand wrapped around the wrist that held the gun.

“Its over you fucking bastard.” He raised his other hand in the air, holding a large rock, and slammed it into my father's face with a sickening *crack!*

My father went completely limp in my arms, my whole body began to quake from the shock. Ukraine held out his hand.

“It's over now, we're free.” He said softly.

I slowly took his hand and allowed him to pull me up, still leaning on him for support. I looked over at my other siblings.

Kazi had a quiet, unreadable expression on his face. He walked towards me and wrapped his arms around me, his wings encasing me like a blanket. I pulled him close.

“We’re going to be okay now.” He said softly, as if he had every answer in the world.

I forced my eyes closed to try and stop the tear that streaked down my face, but I was too late.

I let go of Ukraine and fell into Kazis arms, shaking and sobbing, clinging to him desperately. In the back of my mind I was screaming, screaming to stop crying, to stop being so weak, to grow up and just make it stop. But I didn't care. I was tired, covered in blood, and scared. I choked slightly as I sobbed harder.

‘We’re all just kids....’ I thought as Kazi pulled me closer. *‘We’re all just... broken.’*

A pained cry erupted from my throat as those words rolled over and over in my head.

I'd finally snapped.

I was done.

Here I was, over the body of my father, the father my younger brother had just finished off with a rock, crying like a child in my little brother's arms, no mom, no leg, no home, nothing.

“It's okay to cry.” Kazi said gently, stroking my messy hair.

How was this fair? My eleven year old brother had to grow up so fast. He had so much wisdom in him already, so much pain, why couldn't he just be a kid?

“T-thank you...” I managed, letting go reluctantly, wiping the tears from my eyes.

I looked up at Belarus, who still hadn't moved and beckoned to her.

“Come here...” I said, somewhat shakily, opening my arms. “It’s okay Bela, come here..”

“I-It was my fault.” She said after a few beats. “My fault.”

My arms dropped slightly as I frowned.

“What do you mean?”

“I opened the window.” She said, tears streaking her face. “I-I opened it. I-If I hadn’t then Dad wouldn’t have fallen out. It’s my fault!”

“Bela, no one-”

“No!” She screamed, shaking her head violently, stamping her feet in anger, her small hands running through her hair. “It’s my fault! My fault! My fault!”

She let out a piercing cry and her hands suddenly came down, raking her arms violently, drawing blood.

Ukraine rushed forward and grabbed her arms, trying to stop her from hurting herself again. She screamed louder, kicking and screaming and crying. Bela swung herself violently, knocking the two of them to the ground. Uke tried desperately to pin her down, which only made her howl louder.

I saw the look he gave me when I met his eyes.

Fear.

“Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! Get off of me! It was me! I killed him! My fault! IT WAS ME!” She wailed loudly.

I couldn’t move.

The world seemed to go in slow motion, my brother fighting to keep my little sister down. I could hear and see the sirens that came and stopped in front of us.

But I could only see her.

My Bela-roo.

My little light that had shined so brightly in the darkness.

Was being snuffed out.

A/n: I can't believe we only have one chapter left to go with this book. It's been so so amazing writing for you guys and I can't wait to wrap it all up.

Thank you so much for your love and support!!

Have a great day/night!!

Epilogue

Epilogue

“Morning Stripes....” I muttered sleepily as he shifted slightly in my arms.

My eyes opened slowly, as they adjusted to the light streaming in softly through the windows. It was a Saturday morning, no school. Just me, my boyfriend, and a large bed for the two of us to share.

“Mmmm five more minutes Commie...” Ame muttered back, feeling for my hand before grabbing it and giving it a light squeeze.

“Ame I have stuff to do today.” I leaned forward and rolled him over so he could face me.

He let out a tired groan and kept his eyes squeezed shut as he scrunched his face. He moved a little closer into my chest and began to drift off.

“Come on Ame.” I chuckled softly, kissing his forehead and giving him a gentle nudge. “I have to get up.”

“Fine.” He sighed in irritation and moved away from me, sitting up and rubbing his face.

I sat up with him and gently lifted my hand up to his chin and pulled his face up close to mine, kissing him gently. He kissed back, running his hands slowly up my arms until his fingers scrunched through my hair.

“Happy anniversary.” I smiled.

“Happy anniversary.” He repeated back softly, almost anxiously.

I frowned.

“What? You seem... off...”

"I just-" He inhaled sharply. "I have something to show you. Close your eyes, and don't lie to me about them being closed."

"Alright alright." I closed my eyes like he asked, wondering what he was up to. "Tell me when you're ready."

"Okay open."

I opened my eyes to find his staring right back at me. My breath hitched as I looked into the pale grey swirled film that covered his brilliant blue irises. He heard the sound of my breath and quickly closed his eyes, turning his head away.

"Wait no- don't do that." I said quickly, leaning forward and pulling his head gently to face me. "I just wasn't expecting it."

"I just know I look...broken." He said softly.

"I'm a little broken too. You know what I look like." I nuzzled his cheek.

"I know. You're absolutely hideous." He smirked.

"Shut up you love me." I grinned as he leaned forward and kissed me first this time.

"We'll see."

"You dork."

We were interrupted by the door smacking open, Ame jumped in my arms, startled by the sound.

"Morning love birds." New Zealand smirked at the two of us. "Breakfast is ready and Ukraines looking for you Russia."

"Okay thanks." I nodded.

"So.... did you two..." He made a gesture with his hands.

"Z knock it off." A thick Aussie accent interrupted, Australia grabbed his brother by the arm and pulled him away from the door,

giving me an apologetic smile as he shut the door behind him.

“Z’s so loud...” Ame grumbled, slipping off the bed and walking to the dresser to get some clothes.

I nodded even though he couldn't see it and leaned on the bed for support as I hopped to the dresser to grab my own clothes and changing quickly. I slipped on the new prosthetic, grateful for the comfort it provided instead of the unbearable tightness I'd gotten used to. If I looked closely at the stump, I could see the faint scars tracing the edges. Scars from that night.... Dad....

“Russia? Russia? Are you even listening to me?” I heard Ame say loudly, snapping back into reality.

“Yeah, I'm here. Sorry, just... thinking.” I replied back, turning to face him and stepping forwards to grab his hand. “Ready?”

“Yeah.” He nodded, squeezing my hand as I led him out. “He can't hurt you anymore. You know that right?”

‘Thats where you're wrong...’ I thought in reply, but didn't say a word as we walked down the stairs and into the kitchen.

“Good morning boys.” France smiled at the both of us, looking up from chopping some delicious looking strawberries. “Did you have a good sleep?”

“The usual mom.” Ame shrugged. “What's for breakfast?”

“Croissants, strawberries, and omelettes.” She replied, stepping away from the food to kiss his cheek. “Already on the table.”

“Ew mom stop.” Ame frowned, wiping off the kiss with his hand that was holding mine and then going to sit down.

“Ukraines outside on the porch, he wants to talk to you. I'll have your plates ready when you boys get back inside.” France smiled gently.

“Thanks Mrs. France.” I replied with earnest gratitude as I left to go find my brother.

I knew I would never be able to repay her kindness. Ever since we'd been let out of the hospital, she'd taken us and given us a home over the past year. We would have stayed with Aunt Czechoslovakia but we couldn't... with *her* there.

"Hey." Uke said as I stepped through the front door. "Took you long enough."

He was sitting on the stairs with his knees curled up to his chest, wearing one of Canada's fluffy sweaters for extra warmth. They haven't announced publicly they were dating yet, but it was so clear to everyone else that they definitely were. I knew that the first thing Uke had done when we moved in with their family was tell Canada how he felt and they'd gotten together shortly after. Canada was a good guy and took care of Ukraine, I'd given my permission instantly when he'd politely asked.

"Sorry, Ame didn't want to get up." I sat next to him. "Whats up?"

"I don't... I don't want to anymore." He sighed softly.

"What the hell is wrong with you?" I said in shock. "She's our sister! You can't just abandon her."

"I just want to be done with it. When I... you know.. To dad, that was the end of it. Everytime we go it feels like that night all over again." He retorted angrily.

"Her mind snapped." I growled back. "She- she doesnt know any better. You know that. Seeing dad die... it broke something in her. We're a family and I'm going to keep us together. I won't let you leave her behind."

"Stop bringing Mom into this."

"I'm not." I said quietly, shaking my head. "Not this time. This is me."

He looked up at me, his eyes quietly searching my face before he put his head down onto his arms.

"Everytime I forget about Dad, we have to bring up Bela. To help

you heal or whatever. What about me? Why don't I get a chance to heal? Why can't it just be about me for once!?!” He shouted to the sky.

“Because you know if you needed her to be there for you she would. She's still got a big heart and she loves you.” I tried to put as much conviction into my voice as I could.

“Russia stops. Just stop.” He replied softly. “Shes....”

“I.....”

He was right, why was he always right?

“Get in the car.” I pushed myself up onto my feet.

“What the hell? Why?” He looked up, confused.

“Just get in the car!” I pulled the keys from my pocket and threw them at him as I stormed inside. “Kazi! Come get in the car! We’re going early.”

I waited in the foyer for a puzzled Kazi to come into the front of the house.

“Russia? What's going on?” He asked as I gently grabbed his arm and pulled him out and to the car where Uke was waiting in the passenger seat.

Kazi hopped in the backseat while I turned on the car and pulled out of the driveway. I made the drive to my Aunts house at full speed, ignoring the questions from Kazi and the annoyed swears from Uke.

I pulled into the driveway and got out of the drivers side, marching up to the front door and knocking loudly.

“Oh hey Russia- wait- whoa! Where are you going!” I pushed past a confused Czech as I made my way inside, heading up the stairs to where I knew Belas room was.

I took a deep breath before peeking in the window of the door to

look at my sister and her room.

The whole thing had been covered in soft mattresses like mats and a few small covered ceiling lights were the only offer of light. The window had been covered up long ago and the door leading to her bathroom was missing so you could still watch her every move. A small mattress with blankets and pillows sat in the corner, the only semblance of furniture in the room, nothing hard and with any sharp corners had been allowed.

But Bela was gone.

“Where is she?” I yelled, throwing the door open, ignoring the dust that poofed up when I stepped on the mats. “Bela! Bela!”

I raced from the room and grabbed Czech by the collar of his hockey jersey.

“Where's my sister!?!?”

“Rus! Rus stop! You're doing it again! Uke tell him to stop!” Czech thrashed fearfully.

Ukraine stepped forwards and put a hand on my arm.

“We cant see her anymore remember? She's gone Rus... far away so she can finally be at peace.” Ukraine said softly. “Let him go.”

I dropped Czech and he scrambled away.

“What's going on in here?” Kia walked into the room, looking baffled until his eye fell on me. “Again?”

“I... forgot...” I shook my head, rubbing my temples. “Sorry....”

“It's been months.” Kia replied. “And moms not home if you were looking for her, sorry.”

“Right... I should... I should go...” I nodded, stepping back in a daze. “Sorry.”

I walked back out to the car and got in with my brothers.

Swallowing hard, my hands gripped the steering wheel as thoughts of Bela swirled around my mind. She wasn't here anymore. She was gone. My light. My Bela-roo.

"Russia?" Kazi spoke up anxiously from the back.

"Yeah.. driving.. Sorry..." I started the car and pretended not to see the concerned glances that were exchanged by Kia and Czech from the doorway.

I drove back slowly, still upset and out of control in my mind.

I didn't know what I wanted to do. Part of me wanted to drive back to Ames house and pull him back into bed with me and just forget and the other part of me wanted to drive this car straight off a cliff and just have it all be over.

I was startled by Ukraine suddenly reaching over and grabbing the steering wheel.

"You're drifting." Was his only reply as he let go.

We made it back to the house in one piece and Kazi was immediately out of the car and rushing into the house.

"You don't make it any easier on him when you do that you know." Uke sighed as we got out and I locked the car. "He misses her more than you know."

I nodded, not moving from my spot next to the car as I stared at the ground.

"Hey...." Uke said softly as he walked up to me, patting me awkwardly on the shoulder. "Next time you want to take off like that, tell me so I can stop you okay?"

I nodded again, not trusting myself to speak.

"Lets go inside...."

I sat on the edge of the bed, staring at the photograph in my hands.

It had been a gift from Aunt Czechoslovakia, a reminder once Bela had....gone.....

I flopped down on my side and pulled my leg up to my chest, tears falling slowly down my face as I looked into the bright eyes of my little sister. So full of life and hope, dreams and promises. All gone now. Taken from us.

My breath shook as I breathed in and out, I couldn't cope.

So I cried.

Ever since that night I could never seem to stop myself from crying anymore. It was as if those walls that had come crashing down could never be repaired again.

A knock came from the window and I whirled around, wiping the tears from my eyes. It was Kazi, asking silently for permission to come in. I nodded and he lifted up the window and slipped inside, getting up onto the bed and sitting next to me silently.

“Kazi I-”

“I know. It's okay.” He leaned his head against my shoulder. “I miss her too.”

Both of our heads popped up as Ukraine opened the door, stepping inside quietly.

And then he did something I never thought I'd see him do.

He walked up to the both of us and pulled us into a tight hug, his tears joining the ones that were starting to fall down my cheeks again.

“We're going to be okay.” Kazi said softly, his voice trembling with emotion but still just as confident as the night Dad died.

“H-how do you know?” I replied, my own voice starting to break as my fingers clutched tightly around the photograph of Bela.

“It's like you always say Russia..” Ukraine spoke up, his own voice

surprisingly raw with emotion.

“We are a family.”

A/n: The End!!!!

I'm so happy to finally be able to deliver the end of this story to you and tie up loose ends.

Extra special thank you to [Arrietty-Rune](#) /@the_fox_witch for letting me use your designs/hcs and for you letting me write this fic!! It's such an honor and I hope you liked it.

So now, in true Nebula fashion, I must ask you one final cliffhanger question:

Is Belrus dead? Or alive?

Read the Prequel!!

[image]

Hello I'm back!!

Still have more questions after finishing the story? Good. I hope you do.

Find out what happens first (and next!) in the second book *Catching Starlight*.

[image]

[image]

If you enjoyed *We Are A Family* then please please check it out!!

Much love to y'all!!

